

# THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION IS RESERVED.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 789.—VOL. XXXI.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JUNE 15, 1878.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[A MOMENT OF PERIL.]

## SHE SHINES ME DOWN.

(BY ANNIE THOMAS.)

### CHAPTER XXIII.

It is the little ript within the lute  
That by-and-by will make the music mute,  
And ever widening slowly silence all.

THE horses are considerably fresher after their long rest.

The riders are also fresher after their long luncheon.

One ardent votary of the sport has employed the time (which the others have been "wasting," as he considers it, in eating and resting) in following up every clue the wary otter has left behind, and has his reward in being able to tell his less enterprising companions a secret concerning the object of their chase, which enables them to move on swiftly in reliance on his unerring judgment.

Gladys and Steel Grey are, as usual, well to the fore, trotting sharply along over crackling brackens, and along the meadow lands that border the river, in jealous haste to gain the spot where the happy and unconscious otter is hiding.

"A child might ride the old bay," Arch Salton has told his wife's friend, but the remark which he makes in perfect good faith applies only to a child endowed with a light hand,

moderate discretion, and a reasonable amount of courage.

No child lacking either one of these desirable attributes might hope for long to keep the mastery over the good, sensible, practical, experienced old hunter.

As it happens Miss Gascoigne is not endowed with either a light hand, discretion as to his mouth, or a particle of genuine cool courage.

So now when she finds him sailing away with her in the rear of Steel Grey, she weakly opposes her whim to his will and knowledge of what it is expedient to do, and endeavours to bring him up with a sharp jerk on the curb, with the intention of then turning his head in another direction where he would be free from the temptation of seeing his flying fellows before him.

In her mind, as she attempts to carry out this design, there also lurks a hope that Lord Ellerdale may prefer the novelty of her society to otter-hunting, and that, in the course of a quiet chat she may lead him to see the desirability, and wisdom and policy of persuading Lady Ellerdale to invite her (Miss Gascoigne) to Dalesmeet.

The sharp pull at the curb is given, much to the surprise of the tender-mouthed old bay.

The sweetness of his well-bred temper causes him to bear the outrage patiently enough.

But when his altogether incompetent rider tries to twist him into another path that will lead him straight away from the otter's bourn, he throws submission to the winds, and with a semi-vault recovers his position.

The next moment the beautifully-balanced head of the actress is paying the penalty of its owner having such an ill-balanced seat.

It is down amongst the crispy brackens which are beginning to fade away in russet-down, while her feet, entangled in some mysterious way in her habit, are still hooking on to the pummels.

There is not a grain of vice about the old bay. He stands acquitted in his own mind of any intention to throw her, motionless as a rock the moment she tumbles off, and until Lord Ellerdale, assisted by one or two others, have been able to hoist her back into her place in the saddle.

Her hat is bent, her hair is dishevelled, her head is aching, but the acquired sang-froid of her profession comes to her aid, and she declares that she "will ride home alone" as good temperedly and unaffectedly as if she were full of amiability and guilelessness.

Then as she turns the now slightly remorseful and therefore abjectly obedient old horse once more she has reason to rejoice in her downfall, and in the brief triumph her enemies have had over her, for Lord Ellerdale offers to give up the exciting pleasures of the chase, in order to quietly escort Miss Gascoigne home.

She is a little stiff from the violence of her fall, and the fear of becoming awkward which is engendered by the stiffness subdues and gentles her greatly.

As they ride home through sun and shade, very slowly indeed, for she desires both to prolong the time and to avoid being jolted, she tells Lord Ellerdale pretty little romances of her childhood and early days, chiefly compiled from the equally veracious verbal biographies of her numerous professional friends and rivals, and the name of these latter is legion, for as is natural in such a flight as hers many have tried

their wings against her, and while some have fallen crushed and battered and beaten, others have soared above her, and won from her the hatred of that bitterest of all jealousies—the pure professional.

A woman may forgive another for excelling her in beauty, she, the uglier of the two, will be sure to console herself with the reflection that at least the prettier woman lacks some potent charm of which she, the plainer one, possesses a redundant measure.

She may even forgive, or, what comes to the same thing, forget the defalcation of a lover to some fairer shrine.

Another man's form is sure soon to occupy the missing flatterer's place.

Another man's voice is sure soon to utter dainty deceptions in even more dulcet tones.

Another man's eyes will ere long beam equally refulgent rays of tenderness upon her. In short, "one nail knocks out another," she remembers in time to save herself from becoming despairing.

But if she is passed in the race for fame in her possession whatever it may be, she will look with cruelly critical eyes at the ways and means by which she has been so passed, and if both these are not above suspicion, she will be pitiless in her utterance of the truth respecting her successful competitor, and reckless in her disregard of the consequences of acknowledging enmity.

So now as Miss Gascoigne gilds the days of her youth with many a bit of tinsel torn from the narrations of others about themselves, she gives her auditor many a but half-understood hint as to the absolute and positive untrustworthiness of the sources from whence she is drawing her fables.

But she amuses him by the way in which she decks herself in plumes that he perceives are borrowed, and flatters him by the trouble she takes to make him believe them to be real.

She has no animus against Gladys.

Lurking somewhere about in that portion of her organisation yecept her heart, there is, in fact, a feeling of satisfaction that almost amounts to gratitude towards the woman who has been the means of bringing her in contact with the Ellerdals.

But at the present moment it is the Ellerdals whom it is all important, according to her own idea, that she should gain.

It is the Ellerdals of whom she desires to make honourable mention as the "friends with whom she has been staying," when she goes back to London, and resumes that fight for recognition from a reputable, recognised set, for which she has been battling in a praiseworthy way for a period that would weary most women of their work.

This present is a golden opportunity, and she would not be Geraldine Gascoigne were she to miss it.

Her object is not so much to debase Mrs. Saltoun as to exalt herself.

But if she cannot do the latter without doing the former—well, she will do both unhesitatingly.

She reminds herself that the weakest must always go to the wall, and that Satan proverbially takes the hindmost.

If she can prove herself the stronger of the two, and win the foremost place in the race, then Mrs. Saltoun must contentedly go to the wall, and be taken by his Satanic Majesty.

She goes cleverly enough to work. The women of her kind never do declare their ferocious sentiments openly.

She winds in and around her subject, praising Mrs. Saltoun for her form and face, her feet and hands, and pitying Mrs. Saltoun for certain little exploits, which, unquestionably, when worded, look like what Miss Gascoigne calls them, injudicious.

And then she passionately laments her own unguarded position, round which the tigers of town talk, and the lions of ruthless levity are hourly stalking.

"If only I had a good woman friend, a good, true woman-friend, such as Lady Ellerdale must be to anyone who is fortunate enough to secure

her regard, what a happy girl I should be," she says, giving Lord Ellerdale the full benefit of her fine, truthful blue eyes.

And Lord Ellerdale resolves that for just exactly so long as looking into those eyes gives him any pleasure, his wife shall be such a friend as she describes to Miss Gascoigne.

She takes a sweet and pensive (for she is terribly stiff now) leave of her noble escort at the door of Friars Court, not even inviting him in to have a cup of five o'clock tea, which want of hospitality jars upon him slightly, for he likes five o'clock tête-à-tête with a pretty woman in a soft light on a hot afternoon.

But Miss Gascoigne has two reasons for refraining from giving him the invitation: one is that she does not desire that Gladys should come home and find him there, the other is that she herself feels as if each individual joint had been dislocated and badly reset.

Accordingly, she dismisses him with an air of moral determination that is edifying and impressive, and when she is quite sure that he cannot watch the performance, she ascends the steps, gets into the house, and makes straight away to her own room, when she strives to relax her strained muscles in a hot bath.

An hour and a half later she hears the horses' cutting trot, as Arch and his wife and one or two dinner guests arrive, and in a few minutes, Gladys, happy, bright and beaming, is at her door with the wet otter skin in her hand.

"Let me in," she cries. "I want to tell you what a day we've had; after an hour's sharp work at the hole, he came out like a lion, and the whole pack were after him in a moment, and all on him at once. I tried to save him then, poor old fellow, and jumped Steel Grey right in the midst, but he misunderstood me as well as the hounds. He thought I was as much his foe as they were, and they thought I was urging them, so they killed him quickly, and Arch tore him from them and held him up, and they all decided that I deserved his skin for having been to the fore in such a way. What is the matter with you, Geraldine? are you tired? I heard you had been home a long time."

"Tired?" Geraldine echoes, indignantly. "I think it might have occurred to you to come home before, to hear whether your horrible horse had killed me or not. Lord Ellerdale says he never saw such an extraordinarily bad fall in his life. I fell back right on my head—"

"Over his tail?" Gladys asks, in amazement.

"No, not over his tail; this way." And Geraldine illustrates, as well as she can, the way in which she went over the off-side.

"Well, it really was extraordinarily skilful of you to go off in such a way," Mrs. Saltoun says, thoughtfully. "And who picked you up?"

"Lord Ellerdale," Miss Gascoigne says, glibly. "For all his vanity and absurd belief in himself as a lady-killer, he is a good-hearted, fat old idiot. He thought much more of it than I did; insisted on my coming home at once, and would come with me. It was kind, wasn't it?"

"Very kind," Mrs. Saltoun says.

"Especially as I really hardly ever take any notice of him, or give him a word. I think he says I don't like him, Gladys, and he would give his eyes to win the same attention from me that he gets from other women."

Gladys moves away impatiently towards the window, out of which she gazes—in the direction of Dalesmeet.

"Now his wife I do like," Miss Gascoigne goes on; "she is worlds too good for him, and doesn't think it a bit. If it was not for him there is nothing I should like better, next to staying with you, than to go to her for a few days and make a friend of her. I'm sure there is a story in her life—"

"You're developing imaginative tendencies, Geraldine. I should think if ever there was a storyless face in this world, it is Lady Ellerdale's. She is a dear, good, kind woman; but you can't deck her with a sufficient amount of interest to account for your ardent desire to go and stay with her."

"Well, my dear, believe it or not," Miss Gas-

coigne says, in jaunty accents. "You are quite welcome to retain the friendship of the husband, if I may gain that of the wife. I know you wish me well. I know you are my true friend. Think of what it would be for me to have Lady Ellerdale's countenance and friendship."

Gladys's mobile face hardens into a scornful expression.

"Don't think it needful to give me reasons for anything you may choose to do, and—spare yourself the trouble of ridiculing and abusing Lord Ellerdale, any more."

"I never think of him from morning till night, excepting when you irritate me by showing me how much you like him," Miss Gascoigne says, with much ingenuousness.

But even as she speaks she watches Gladys keenly to see how her words tell.

"Don't you think it's time we had Florence and Clement down here?" Mr. Saltoun says to his wife this day at dinner, and she agrees with him.

"Quite time, Arch, and I'll keep my promise about the pascos and greyhounds, if, when the children come, we find they can't all agree. You know the Dumorests, don't you?" she adds to Miss Gascoigne.

"I do, and I don't. Mr. Dumorest I know very well; he painted me four years ago for the Academy, but Mrs. Dumorest forgets me from time to time, and as you know, Gladys, it isn't always pleasant to be obliged to remind people that they have seen you before. I think I have heard that Mrs. Dumorest only likes her husband to paint plain women."

"Florence is too pretty a woman to have any feeling of that kind," Arch puts in.

"Ah! then she dislikes me for something else, and not for my looks as I thought, but I am sure of this that she does dislike me. I always know when people do at once, and I am equally quick at discerning if they like me. Now I saw the other day that Lady Ellerdale took a fancy to me at once; perhaps it was that she saw that I was not inclined to run after her husband and offer him adulation as so many women do. I'm certain of another thing, and that is that if she changes towards me it will be because some officious meddler tries to set her against me. Fortunately she has no odious Miss Classon to earwig her."

Mrs. Saltoun vouchsafes no answer, and merely smiles when Arch says to her by-and-bye:

"Your friend Miss Gascoigne is too suspicious of the motives of others, for a girl, and she is a bit of a schemer too, if I'm not mistaken, Gladys."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Oh, woman! in our hours of ease,  
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,  
When pain and anguish wring the brow  
A ministering angel thou.

THREE weeks have passed since the day of the otter hunt, and Lady Ellerdale has been taught to believe, as firmly as she believes most things, that the presence of Miss Gascoigne at Dalesmeet is essential to her (Lady Ellerdale's) well-being.

The system of education which has brought her ladyship to this conclusion has been conducted with much judgment and skill—not to say subtlety.

The beautiful actress has never thrust herself forward, nor has she been thrust forward into Lady Ellerdale's notice by the earl.

Nevertheless, Lady Ellerdale feels that at no cost to herself, she is gratifying her husband by inviting Miss Gascoigne to be her guest, and also feels a sure conviction that Miss Gascoigne is gratifying herself intensely by devoting her time and social talents to the entertainment of Lady Ellerdale.

There is a great deal of talk in the neighbourhood at this unexpected combination of peeress and actress.

But Lady Ellerdale is so high above the heads of the herd that she never hears its babble.



She does sometimes wonder, with a limp kind of wonderment, why Mrs. Saltoun, a woman for whom she has felt real kindness and real pity, should be so estranged from her in seeming.

She also tries, in a desultory, ineffectual way to puzzle out the problem of why she herself should be growing gradually to think less kindly and pityingly of Mrs. Saltoun.

Nothing definite has occurred to change her sentiments towards that lady.

No one has told her aught to rouse the fretful porcupine feeling in her British matronly breast, yet it is there irritating her into unsympathetic curiosity about, and ungenerous suspicions of, Mrs. Saltoun.

"No one has said anything against you to me. Miss Gascoigne has always spoken well and kindly of you."

This is the rejoinder Lady Ellerdale makes to the one half-affectionate, half-defiant declaration Gladys makes to the effect that "something—no not something, but someone," has estranged Lady Ellerdale from her.

"I can neither protest, nor explain, nor extenuate," Gladys says in reply. "No one has said anything openly, but, Lady Ellerdale, 'whispered words can poison truth,' and truth has been poisoned most effectually as far as I'm concerned in your mind. If you were not the Countess of Ellerdale, if I were not a woman with everything to gain in this neighbourhood and nothing to lose, I would take some trouble to set this matter straight. As it is—"

"My dear, I have always endeavoured to do my duty to the letter to you as a neighbour."

"You have, but the time has come when you do it any longer would be tedious to you," Gladys says, with her old, low, musical laugh, a laugh that is at the same time charming and aggravating.

"And Lord Ellerdale always speaks in the highest terms of you."

"He is very good," Gladys says, with the laugh dying suddenly.

"He is very good," Lady Ellerdale says; and two little red spots flush out into her usually pallid cheeks. "He is very good, only at dinner last night Miss Gascoigne let a word or two slip that you had said against him—not exactly 'against' him, but ridiculing him—and he wouldn't listen, and wouldn't believe, and blamed her sharply for her inadvertence."

"Her inadvertence!" Gladys says, rising languidly. "Can he really apply such a harsh word to such a very venial error made by my sweet friend? Yes, Lady Ellerdale, you are right, he is good to screen me from his own wrath—wrath raised too so inadvertently by my own friend. Will you tell him how deeply I am touched by his generous championship and how grateful I am to him for crediting me with something like womanly feeling, though he had the word of my friend to prove to him that it was lacking in me."

"When have you arranged that Miss Gascoigne shall return to you?" Lady Ellerdale says, irrelevantly, under the influence of the strong feeling she has that the conversation is taking a dubious turn, and that she is not entertaining an angel unawares in the person of Miss Gascoigne.

"Whenever you and Lord Ellerdale can spare her, and that will not be just yet, I am sure," Gladys says, with a smile that has no special meaning for Lady Ellerdale, and that therefore gilds Mrs. Saltoun's retreat in a most pleasing and harmonious manner.

Two days after this Mrs. Saltoun receives a note that causes her heart to throb with a variety of sensations.

When she has reflected over the contents of it for a few moments, the other sensations take to themselves wings, and the only one that remains is one of unlimited, unsought-for, precious power.

The note is to the following effect:

"DEAR MRS. SALTOUN,

"Miss Gascoigne tells me that she can return to you at any time. It will be a friendly action towards me on your part, if you will give her an invitation at once, as Lady

Ellerdale has developed a nervous illness in the course of the last day or two, which naturally engrosses all my time and attention, and renders her quite incapable of exercising the duties of hostess to your charming friend.

"Yours truly, ELLERDALE."

"My 'charming friend' has made a false step in some direction," Gladys says to herself; "but Friars Court shall not harbour her; when she is compelled to leave Dalesmeet, she shall leave the neighbourhood too, and then Lord Ellerdale shall be taught to know that my friendship is not to be picked up and worn openly, and then torn off and thrown aside like an old glove."

Full of this rather ferocious resolve, Mrs. Saltoun sits down, and in white heat, dashes off this reply to Lord Ellerdale's letter.

"MY DEAR LORD ELLERDALE,—Your suggestion is unluckily timed. Family business of importance takes me to town to-morrow, and even if my husband does not accompany me, he will hardly, I think, be prepared to receive my charming friend in my absence. I am filled with regret about Lady Ellerdale's illness, and hope on my return to hear that she has quite recovered from it.—Yours very truly,

"GLADYS SALTOUN."

"I have written as you said I must, and had her answer," Lord Ellerdale says to Miss Gascoigne this same evening, while they were waiting in the drawing-room for Lady Ellerdale to come down and allow them to proceed towards that dinner which has been over long ready, and repeatedly announced.

"And her answer is?" Miss Gascoigne asks quickly.

"That family business takes her to town to-morrow, and that her husband is hardly prepared to welcome you warmly in her absence."

"Jealous goose," Miss Gascoigne says, shrugging her shoulders—"not jealous of Arch Saltoun, don't make a mistake, but of me, because you like me and interest yourself as to where I go when Lady Ellerdale's nervous attack turns me out of Dalesmeet, pleading 'family business,' too, when she has neither a family nor any business to claim her. Well, my lord, what have you to say now in favour of your generous-hearted and well-bred friend?"

"She has been very kind to you," he says, deprecatingly, "and if she shows a bit of her rough side to you now you can hardly wonder at it, as you have made a coolness between her and my wife."

She laughs her well-known, well-sounding stage laugh, and shows half the glittering surface of her pearly teeth.

"Your wife! Do you think for one instant that Mrs. Saltoun cares for your wife's cool looks and altered manner. It is your inability to stand her everlasting caprices, your determination to free your neck from the fetters of the blue ribbons with which she has so vauntingly and openly adorned you, that has raised her malice and spite and antagonism against me, and all this because of your title, and your wealth and power in this district! all this because she will be the one woman distinguished by the one distinguished man in her coterie! If she were fighting for the maintenance of a friendship I could forgive her, but she is fighting for her own exaltation at the expense of the humiliation of other women who are—who are—"

Miss Gascoigne's jeremiad merges into well-managed sobs. Sobs that inflate her fine chest, and that even accompanied by tears as they are, do not at all militate against that bewitching appearance of hers which is enthralling Lord Ellerdale for a time.

The result may easily be guessed. Mrs. Saltoun is not present to look pretty at him, therefore he betrays a pleasing and praiseworthy readiness to take any view of the case which Miss Gascoigne may offer to his mental vision, and by the time Lady Ellerdale joins them, Miss Gascoigne feels that the limits of her sojourn at Dalesmeet are entirely within her own jurisdiction.

"I think she's cold-hearted," Lady Ellerdale says to her husband this night when she has in her calm way caged him securely in her boudoir for a few minutes' chat.

"I daresay she is—to men," he responds readily; "women in her position are compelled to be unless they would forfeit the friendship of women in yours; but she's sincerely attached to you, that is evident, or she wouldn't bury herself here with a couple of old married fogies like ourselves."

Lady Ellerdale has never permitted herself to be either jealous, suspicious, or exacting during the whole term of her married life. Her accents fall upon his ears rather strangely now, when in answer to this she says:

"I don't think she looks upon you as an old foggy, whatever she may think of me."

Lady Ellerdale's nervous disorder grows and grows apace. Mr. Dent is called in with very little good effect.

"Her ladyship requires change of air and rest of mind," he says, disinterestedly, for change of air means that he will lose her for his patient.

But her ladyship shakes her head, and declares that she needs nothing of the kind. No air in this world suits her as well as the air of Dalesmeet, and if she cannot find peace of mind in her own sweet, loved home where in the world can she hope to find it.

Still though she refuses the proposed remedies, she does not get better of the disease for which they are prescribed.

Her daily labours among the pampered poor of Hesselton cease, unwillingly enough, but still do cease altogether.

She grows not less patient in her home life, but betrays palpably that it is more of an effort to her now than it was heretofore to maintain this patience.

"Suffering is not the word to employ in my case, Mr. Dent," she says wistfully, when the perplexed Hesselton surgeon proposes that she shall have further advice from London in order that further steps may be taken to alleviate her "sufferings." "I am not 'suffering,' I am only withering."

"But you must not be allowed to wither; we shall none of us permit your ladyship to dream of withering," he says in his most sonorous professional accents.

"A cold blast has passed my way, Dent, and it has swept over me, and I feel it—to death," she says, quietly. "No one can see that blast, whence it cometh, or whither it goeth, only I feel it!"

"I must still press you to have further advice," Mr. Dent says, earnestly; "for my own sake I must ask you to submit to what you think needless in order to satisfy my own—conscience."

He brings out the last word with a great effort, and a heavy quail, and looks sharply at Lady Ellerdale as he utters it, to see how she bears the utterance.

It pains him to see that she bears it without surprise, without curiosity, without indignation.

As she lies back on her sofa with tears welling out from between her closed eyelids, and with a desperately drawn, pained expression about those poor pinched lips of hers, the Countess of Ellerdale is an object of actual pity in the eyes of the Hesselton surgeon.

When he takes leave of her presently it is with an air of touching deference that her rank and position have never won from him.

In his eyes the mighty shadow of the Cross of death is over her already.

The Earl of Ellerdale is waiting for him in the library.

Through the opposite door (a door that leads into the billiard-room) a graceful female form, clad in raiment of rustling silk, vanishes as Mr. Dent comes in.

"I have come to tell your lordship that further advice is absolutely necessary," the doctor begins at once, speaking more sharply than he had ever before thought he could speak to a husband no soon about to be bereft, or to the king of the county.

"We had better remove her ladyship to town?" Lord Ellerdale questions, anxiously.

"A removal will be fatal, my lord. A most painful and alarming change has taken place since I saw her ladyship last night. My directions must have been disregarded, I fear, and my prescriptions tampered with. Lady Ellerdale is in great danger. You must telegraph for Sir — or Sir —" (he mentions the names of two leading London doctors) "at once."

"I'll telegraph for every physician in town," Lord Ellerdale roars, and then his lordship proceeds in accents of level invective to denounce everyone in his establishment for having disregarded the medical directions, and tampered with the prescriptions.

"Was her ladyship's maid with her last night?" Mr. Dent asks.

"No, Miss Gascoigne, a friend who is —" Lord Ellerdale checks himself abruptly, for Miss Gascoigne herself sweeps back through the billiard-room door.

"I can answer your question, Mr. Dent, perhaps even better than Lord Ellerdale can: at her own request I stayed with Lady Ellerdale till three this morning, then worn out by fatigue I went to the dressing-room, and fell asleep on the sofa; when I awoke, Lady Ellerdale had taken her medicine I found from the state of the bottles, and was in a deep, peaceful sleep, seeing which, I went to my own room and went to rest with the happy conviction in my mind that I should find my friend perfectly restored to health this morning."

"You were sanguine, indeed," Mr. Dent says, coldly; "her ladyship's condition last night did not justify you in leaving her, and her state this morning certainly does not realise those sanguine hopes."

"He's an ill-mannered, uneducated man, but I think he's sincerely anxious about Lady Ellerdale," she says, with sweet suavity as soon as the doctor goes; "it is only natural, it is only human that he should exaggerate her danger, in order to make you exaggerate your gratitude and reward, when he does effect the perfect cure he knows he will effect."

"He's genuine enough. I'm sure he thinks Lady Ellerdale in great danger," Lord Ellerdale says, looking away from the brilliant would-be comforter by his side, and wishing that the quiet, unobtrusive, soothing companion of so many years were with him instead.

"And when I left her at three in the morning—exactly at three—she was so much better," Miss Gascoigne says, meditatively, "could anyone have got to her after I left?"

(To be Continued.)

### THE VALUE OF "WASTE."

THE Bradford Corporation have accepted the tender of Mr. Steuart, of Manchester, offering £10,359 per annum for seven years for the ammoniacal liquor produced at Bradford Gasworks during that period from July 1st. There were several tenders, the highest being £10,600. The price paid under the expiring contract has been £900 per annum during the past ten years. The holder of this contract was among the competitors for the new contract, and his tender was not £800 a year, but £8,000 a year! The discovery in the liquor of a certain chemical substance used in the manufacture of aniline dyes has greatly enhanced its value.

### THE ORIGIN OF "LYNCH LAW."

LYNCHBURG—"Old Lynchburg," the inhabitants love to call it, veneration for what is ancient being a distinguishing feature of the more cultivated classes in the United States as elsewhere—lies among the mountains on the southern bank of James River, in the centre of the Piedmont district, and not far from the bar

of the Blue Ridge (Virginia). In was once one of the wealthiest towns of America. Fortunes have been amassed here in tobacco, and, as it is now becoming a railway centre, it is likely that in time it will rise from being a "little city" of 12,000 people to become once more a great wealth-producing hive of industry.

In that world which lives among dictionaries it is famous as having given a new word to the English language.

Colonel Lynch, the Irish emigrant, whose name has been applied to the town, was a noted soldier in the Revolutionary War. This hot-headed Hibernian, when he caught a "Tory," punished the individual whose chief crime was that he did not think as Colonel Lynch thought and did not do as he did, after such a summary fashion, that in time speedy "justice" of a somewhat equivocal type came known all the world over as "Lynch Law."

### THE DAUGHTER'S PICTURE.

"Uron the wall," she said, "you see  
A picture that is dear to me;  
A picture with a fair, sweet face  
That looks at me with tender grace.

"Not from a master's hand it came,  
A thing to win immortal fame;  
And by its sweetness more than art  
It holds dominion o'er my heart.

"No gaudy, costly frame of gold  
Of rare design, or richest mould,  
Encloses it; yet on the wall  
That picture is the best of all.

"The world's applause it ne'er hath won  
Though many years their course have run  
Since first I saw it hanging there—  
That kind, sweet face, so bright, so fair.

"The rarest gems that ever shone,  
For me such beauty ne'er have known,  
As this sweet orator of art  
Whose eloquence controls my heart.

"Would'st ask me why this picture  
there  
Is more than Titian's paintings rare?  
More than the grandest works e'er  
wrought  
By master hand and master thought?

"I'll answer, 'tis a portrait fair  
Of one who often soothed my care,  
One whom I cherished all above—  
Whose sweet lips taught a mother's  
love." C. D.

### SCIENCE.

#### EFFECT OF SEA WAVES ON MASONRY.

A REMARKABLE instance of the effect of sea waves on masonry is furnished in the case of the well known breakwater at Wick. The height of the waves at this place was, it appears, several times measured and estimated, the result showing about forty-two feet from crest to hollow. Stones of eight and ten tons weight were, by these waves, carried from the parapet to the very top of the breakwater; and it was therefore determined, finally, to construct the outward extremity of the breakwater by depositing three courses of one hundred ton blocks of stone on the rubble base, as a foundation for three courses of large flat stones, surmounted by a monolith of cemented rubble built on the spot. The end of the breakwater, therefore, was in substance a monolith weighing upwards of eight hundred tons, being about twenty-six

feet by forty-five, and not less than eleven feet in solid thickness, cemented to the underlying rubble base. Incredible as it might seem, this huge monolithic mass succumbed to the force of the waves—it was, indeed, actually seen by the resident engineer to be bodily slewed around by successive strokes until it was finally removed and deposited inside the pier. Not only the upper portion, but the three lower courses of stone, forming a mass of 1,950 tons, were removed without breaking.

THE phonograph cannot pronounce the letters K and W.

LONDON BRIDGE, it is said, could be lighted by six electric lamps at a cost not greater than that of its present gas light, with the illumination of a thousand times the amount afforded at present. For what are called congested traffic spaces, and where the light could penetrate all round, the electric light would be very valuable.

ACID as a constituent of imperfectly ripe mulberry juice, which was found to contain 26.83 grains of citric acid and 3.26 grains of potash salts per litre, suggest that the juice may be valuable as a substitute for lime juice, and as an antiscorbutic.

THREE remarkable steps in scientific progress and discovery have been made within the past few months. The reduction of the telephone to practical use on telegraph lines; the discovery of the phonograph, by which the sounds of the human voice are mechanically recorded and re-delivered; the liquefaction of hydrogen and oxygen gases by pressure and cold.

A NEW LIFE-SAVING BOAT.—One afternoon recently, shortly after the House met, a number of Members went down to the Speaker's Steps to witness an experimental trial of a new "folding boat" which has been invented by Mr. W. H. Crispin, of Stratford. The boat exhibited measured 11ft. by 4ft., with a depth of 1ft. 4 inches. It is constructed of very thin steel, and weighs less than 100lbs., and is so made that when not in use the gunwales can be brought together by dropping the cross-seats, which work upon hinges for that purpose. The object of this arrangement is to occupy a minimum of space, and great buoyancy is secured by small air bags placed under the thwarts. The boat, although small, will carry three persons, and even if it were filled with water, one man would be perfectly safe in it. When closed its breadth is but one-third of its beam; its draft and displacement are very slight, and it can be propelled at a high rate of speed. The result of the trial was to convince those who witnessed it that a craft of these dimensions and life-saving qualities would be highly valuable for the use of vessels of all sorts carrying a large number of people, such as emigrant ships, troopships, &c. The lightness and portability of this invention would also probably make it a very useful rowing boat for yachts and other private purposes.

THE electric light is valuable for making signals at a distance, no less than for casting a halo of illumination around, in order to detect the approach of hostile craft at night. A light similar to that carried on board Admiral Hornby's flag-ship appears, we are told, as bright as a star of the first magnitude at a distance of thirty miles on a clear night, so that it is evident the electric lamp must be exceeding valuable for signalling; and respecting the use of its rays as a safeguard against torpedo attacks, it appears that by sweeping the horizon by this light, vessels may be detected at a distance of a mile, while the smoke of a steam-launch betrays its presence at more than 2,000 yards. As the smoke and steam of an engine readily reflect the light, a torpedo boat could not approach without immediate discovery, so that the value of this last use of electricity, as aiding to preserve our costly war vessels from destruction, can scarcely be over-estimated.





[HER RIVAL.]

## THE WHISPERS OF NORMAN CHASE.

### CHAPTER XVII.

The walls themselves are speaking.

FORD.

AUGUSTA FAIRLEIGH and Lady Mountcastle's nephew, it will be seen, had already met without recognition. They met again, before the same sun had set, and, henceforth, they were to be to one another, as love is to life—essential.

"Fortunate," said Stanley Hope, the younger son of a somewhat impoverished peer, "that I thought of calling for something at my chambers. You might have been seriously troubled. What do you think was the object?"

"I have no idea. I never saw the place before. I do not even know its name."

He told her—Lyon's Inn, now vanished.

"I never heard of it, or of anyone living there."

"It is nearly full of lawyers, and of a very low class. Something to do with your fortune, no doubt."

Thus speculating, they reached Berkeley Square. After all, it was but an adventure, with a fright, and Augusta looked none the less brilliant for it, as she laughing went to change her dress, and re-appear in more every-day attire. But all that evening, as if with the flush of some new excitement upon her, she appeared to be dreaming.

Going early to rest, the young girl did then really dream of a dusky no-thoroughfare, a strange man, an instant's struggle, a handsome face and strong arm, a pleasant drive, and some nameless change which had taken place in her life.

It must be confessed that, up to this time, there had been few except happy experiences in Miss Fairleigh's youth.

Rich, beautiful, and complete mistress of her own actions, and gifted with an intense power of enjoyment, she had, as yet, known nothing of the higher passions.

Love was a perfect stranger to her, except that she had seen it making two of her friends miserable.

Friendship, indeed, had only shone fitfully upon her path; but she felt confident that, with regard to Evelyn, the cloud would clear away.

But two new sensations had touched her. The first was that she had become the object of a plot, though utterly unable to conceive how or why.

The second—but that was a secret untold, as yet even to herself. While thus

In a sort of wakeful swoon perplexed she lay

the "ivory door of dreams" closed upon the calm sleep of an untroubled youth, and when Augusta Fairleigh awoke next morning she could not have told what the visions of the night had been.

Her visit to London was to extend over a month.

Not a word had reached her from or concerning Evelyn Hedley, who had suddenly, for the second time, disappeared.

The news which had startled her at the concert was true.

Sir Norman Hedley had really been arrested for the murder of Henry Mainwaring, and that, as Mr. Tyndall Thorpe swore, upon information supplied by his own daughter.

But the law had no sooner hard hold of him than it was compelled to let him go.

There wasn't a solitary individual forthcoming to testify to the extent of a syllable against him.

No one dreamed of looking for Evelyn in her own rooms at Norman Chase.

As to Mathew Drake, his plans were far from ripe at present.

Little did he imagine that a nightly watch had been kept upon him; that he had been seen to finish copying the great sheep-skin document, seal it in various places with a seal which he previously compared most carefully with others on the parchments whence he had been copying it, smear it over with different liquids, which left dark stains on the surface, and, with a chuckle, carry it away.

"We must see where he hides it," said Evelyn.

This time, however, their usual success did not accompany them. The man, evidently elated, disappeared so swiftly from sight, that without a quick and noisy pursuit, they could not hope to overtake him. And in that there might be serious danger. For Evelyn had said:

"I have changed my mind about the pistols. What should I do with them? It might answer very well for the stage; but I am only an English girl, and you are only a dear old nurse."

"But what of the Picture Gallery?"

"That idea I mean to carry out. Did you ever read a play called 'Hamlet'?"

"No."

"Then I will read it to you this afternoon. Perhaps it will help you to understand me better."

They did pay a visit to the gallery, and very pale the young girl looked when they came out of it.

"Where are you going now?" asked Martha Page, who seemed under the influence of some superstitious fear.

"To Henry Mainwaring's room. And I shall not leave it for a week."

The nurse shuddered, but followed her much-loved young mistress.

To Martha Page was delegated the task of keeping an open eye upon the proceedings of Mr. Mathew Drake.

There was nothing very peculiar about them.

He appeared, however, to be continually searching and listening, as if waiting for some person or some event.

Evelyn paid little heed to what was reported her concerning him.

"Her thoughts were elsewhere."

"Shall I convict him?" was the question she perpetually asked herself. "Ah! Can I?"

"Come with me," it was Martha Page speaking with baited breath. "I can see nothing, but I can hear."

Reluctantly, Evelyn left her task, and followed the woman to the door of Mathew Drake's chamber.

Two voices were audible. So low were their tones, however, that neither was recognisable. Presently, however, one of the speakers said, in a louder key:

"After her conversation with the lawyer, she fled and hid herself."

"He does not suspect that I am here," whispered Evelyn. "But who is the other?"

"Hush, he will answer."

"Nothing distinct was heard."

"Someone moves," said Evelyn. "Here, in this corner. Quick!"

They concealed themselves in the deep and shadowy recess.

Mathew Drake came forth, looked out, and up and down the passage. He then re-entered the room, leaving the door open. There was no one with him.

"I wish she were here," he muttered. "She should stay. Poor Evelyn!"

The young girl bit her lip, and trembled with an emotion very different from fear.

The man seemed to enjoy his soliloquy.

He went on:

"That fellow, Leasholme, at any rate, will never look at her again. He thinks now, the idiot, that he can take dainty Augusta in exchange. My learned friend, you had better see after your bargain."

This last sentence was unintelligible to the two listeners. They were sick of hearing the self-muttered words of this infatuated scoundrel. But to regain either their own room or that in which the Mainwaring tragedy had been enacted, it was necessary to pass by Mathew Drake's door.

Fortunately, they waited.

The man went out at the opposite end of the room, and, instinctively, they followed him. He went straight to the old chapel-like chamber.

There, he opened the same modern-fashioned chest as before, and deposited in it a thick roll, only bound round with red tape.

Then he took from the same receptacle another roll, exactly similar.

"When a search is made," he said, once more speaking to himself, "that will, of course, be found. But this—shall I destroy it? No; it may be of some use yet. I will hide it—with the other relic."

And, lifting a slab in the pavement, he secreted the document, pausing first to look down into the grave-like gap, evidently upon some object which it contained.

A ghastly laugh appeared to convulse him from head to foot. Reclosing the aperture, he took his way back to his den.

"We must see those papers," said Evelyn, with an unsteady voice.

"Impossible. Unless we follow his lamp we shall lose our way in the darkness."

"We will go back for a light. The wretch must sleep sometimes; but I will have his secret, if I wait till dawn."

Who could tell how that midnight quest would end? The elder woman half repented that she had entered upon it at all.

The young girl was devoured by a fierce excitement, though even she felt heart-faint at the conviction that they were treading in the shadow of a fearful crime.

Yet she would not recoil; no, not if a phantom from the other world had stood in her way.

That was her thought. But, as she knew this to be impossible, her courage was, after all, not quite miraculous.

The chimes of Norman Chase sounded the hour of two.

Then Evelyn Hedley and Martha Page returned upon their steps, carrying no light, but bearing with them the means of producing one.

Mathew Drake's room was dark, and the door still open.

Neither sight nor sound of any kind impeded their purpose. They went straight to the chapel.

Nothing was easier than to open the chest and take out the parchment roll.

It was a matter of rather more difficulty to lift the heavy stone slab, and secure from beneath it the other document. Evelyn started, and an irrepressible cry escaped her.

There lay, in a coil, the cord of Indian silk with which her father's guest had been strangled.

"We will have that too," she said, in a husky voice.

But neither of them could lay a finger upon the instrument of murder. Unwillingly, but as if under some compulsion, not to be resisted, they left it there.

"Shall we read what is written on these parchments here, or in your room, Miss Evelyn?" inquired Martha Page.

"In my room; but we must come back again," was the answer.

"Why? My dear child, you will be worn out by the morning."

"I must finish my work. Come. I will see what his work has been these nights past."

They reached their room without molestation, locked the door, and unrolled the first parchment.

It was, as they both expected, the last Will and Testament of Henry Mainwaring, "now of Norman Chase, Yorkshire, lately of Allahabad," and other cities of India. By this deed he devised the whole of his vast property to his "only"—this word was partially erased—"adopted" daughter, Evelyn H. There were two dashes through the initial—"heiress" of Sir Norman Hedley, of Norman Chase, in the county of Yorkshire.

Then followed a long recitation of wealth stored up in lands, financial investments, and so forth, unnecessary to particularise, ending with the remarkable words:

"All which I bequeath to the said Evelyn, for her happiness, as heaven may bless her, solely because of the deep love I have borne her from her birth.—HENRY MAINWARING."

The details were precisely those which were wanting in the first fragmentary document that had been discovered after the perpetration of that awful crime under the roof of Norman Chase.

"His love for me, from my birth!" ejaculated the young girl. "I never saw or heard of him, until a few days before he died."

"That is the true will. Now for the forgery," was the practical comment of Martha Page.

It would have been difficult for the most experienced expert to detect the slightest difference between the two sets of parchment sheets.

Evelyn read on in amazement.

"They are, word for word, the same," she exclaimed.

So they were.

What could this man mean by a forgery which led to nothing?

Still, she read on.

Still, not the slightest deviation between the language and expressed intentions of the two wills.

It was nearly concluded.

"The same again," she said. "All which I bequeath to the said Evelyn, for her happiness, as Heaven may bless her, solely because of the deep love I have borne her from her birth. Ah, the wretch!"

The young girl looked with an expression of triumphant scorn upon her beautiful face at her companion—"the forger and idiot!"

"On the one condition that, on or before her twenty-first birthday, she shall become the law-

ful wife of my dearest friend and best benefactor, Mathew Drake."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

In one blind cry of passion and of pain,  
Caught up the whole of love and uttered it,  
And bade adieu for ever. TERTYSON.

LADY MOUNTCASTLE, whose nephew had come to the aid of Augusta Fairleigh in her unexpected and unexplained peril, was a personage of a very marked character.

She thought Stanley Hope the perfection of a young man, gallant, generous, handsome—with only one fault—the want of a sufficient fortune.

It was, therefore, with a promptitude deserving of the highest praise, that she recognised the merits of Augusta Fairleigh.

That young lady possessed loveliness, grace and good manners, had the social hall-mark of a presentation at Court stamped upon her, and—so the rumour went—was mistress of a million.

What more propitious chance than that which threw her in the way of her nephew, whom she loved beyond all creatures living, and who was heir to an old but poor peerage?

She saw nothing more than a perfectly poetical adjustment of affairs in the future which thus rose upon her vision—a coronet for the comparatively plebeian Augusta, wealth for the comparatively necessitous young noble. Hence her invitation, amounting almost to a desire, that her house should be regarded as a home by the heiress of Fairleigh Manor.

It was a pleasant one, with abundant attractions for a young girl to whom the atmosphere of the metropolis was new. Augusta was in no hurry to abridge her stay.

Nor was it long before the demeanour of Stanley Hope told to her heart the story of an unuttered love.

They were often together; his visits to Mountcastle House were frequent; they rode together in the park, and were continually meeting in drawing-rooms.

The time, however, for the return of Augusta home drew near, when Lady Mountcastle said, one morning:

"Give me another week, dear Miss Fairleigh. A niece of mine will be here to-day, whom I should like you to know."

The niece arrived—Miss Constance Hope—a brilliant, haughty, dark-eyed, dark-haired girl, of some three-and-twenty years.

Their first meeting was not propitious to any idea of future friendship.

Constance Hope coldly acknowledged her introduction to Augusta Fairleigh.

Augusta, on her part, could not understand why this stately girl should almost close her eyes when slightly bowing her head to her.

It might have been otherwise, had not Stanley Hope been, just then, in conversation with his relative's young guest.

The first quick glance of Constance had revealed to her the secret which Stanley had not yet confessed to himself, and of which Augusta was far from being distinctly conscious.

It was as if a draught of poison had been offered to the lips of the proud and passionate girl.

Her whole heart, though the truth was known only to herself, lay in the keeping of her cousin, Stanley Hope.

She loved him with a deep, silent, brooding love, the more intense for being hidden in utter secrecy.

And this fair, tender, golden-haired young girl had come between them—between her and the promised land of her future.

"I will make sure of it," she thought before—

What else she thought, it is unnecessary to say. But she did "make sure of it" on that very evening.

Gayest among the gay, and brightest among the bright, to outward seeming, not a movement, not a tone, of the man she loved, or of the girl she hated, escaped her.



Clearly, a climax was approaching. She saw Stanley Hope and Augusta Fairleigh pass into a small arched gallery, embarked with rare exotics which communicated between two gorgeous saloons.

He was speaking in a low voice; she was listening, as if in happy rapture.

Constance met them, face to face, and the duet was converted into a trio.

"Cousin Stanley," she said, lightly. "You have neglected me disgracefully to-night, when I am but a few hours arrived. But I cannot wonder at it."

And she turned, and bent her head with a smile of exquisite sweetness to Augusta. That young damsel was astonished at the change. Presently, she left the cousins to join the lady of the House. Stanley Hope concealed his vexation.

"Miss Fairleigh is a charming and beautiful creature," she said, "but I wish the old stories could come true."

"How, and why?" he asked.

"In which the Prince does not say that he is a Prince until he is certain that his love is prized for its own sake. A coronet, dear Stanley, is a dazzling temptation to a young girl who has a large fortune, but only a commoner's name."

That was all. It planted the first seed, however.

At any rate Stanley Hope, treacherous to his higher nature, found himself asking:

"Can it be true?"

Half an hour later, he was standing alone in a little alcoved room, leading out of a gallery which had been given up to dancing, when two sentences were uttered, by different persons, which it was impossible for him to avoid overhearing. Nor was it intended that he should.

"I cannot believe it, dear aunt, I cannot think that my cousin is mercenary."

"Not mercenary, Constance, but I told him of Miss Fairleigh's fortune, and when he had heard all about it, he heroically told me not to say another word upon the subject. He will have a title to maintain, you know, and, if he does marry a little beneath him, his coronet will cover all defects. Miss Fairleigh has played her cards wonderfully well, this evening, and so, I must admit, has Stanley."

Augusta Fairleigh, too, had overheard every syllable of this brief conversation, and to the first flush of indignation succeeded a painful pallor.

That she should be looked upon as angling for the son of a broken down peer!

That he should be in a plot to retrieve the family fortunes by a plebeian marriage!

He had alluded to her wealth, she remembered, at their first meeting.

She would return to Fairleigh Manor on the very next day.

"I'll be shot if I lie under this imputation!" said Stanley Hope to himself, aloud, with a somewhat unnecessary addition to the words, as he banged himself into bed. "I'll be back at Mountcastle before twelve hours are over."

So these childish follies of affection separated heart from heart, which should never have been divided by a suspicion.

But the heart is a temple of false faiths and idolatrous adorations.

What were their sorrows thus created, like foam upon the wavering surface of water, to those of Evelyn Hedley, without a friend, her ancient nurse excepted, who was following a dark secret through the solitudes of Norman Chase?

"I have three years' respite," she said, after reading the last clause in the will. "But does he think I would marry him, or be false to myself, if a crown depended upon it?"

Martha Page made no reply; the question, indeed, had not been addressed to her.

"What shall you do next, Miss Evelyn?" asked the nurse.

"Come, and you shall see. We have him for forgery, at any rate," said the young girl, in whose voice there was now no girlishness whatever, but rather the accent of a detective officer.

It was a simple matter. They left one of the parchments in Evelyn's room, under secure and secret lock and key, and deposited the other in the chest which, to all appearance, held so many of the hopes entertained by Mr. Mathew Drake.

"And now?" again inquired the nurse.

"We will follow your advice, and wait. But you go back first, Martha. I want to be for a few moments alone."

Reluctantly the old woman obeyed, and Evelyn, not usually weak, knelt down on the floor, and broke into a passion of tears.

"Those hateful prophecies!" she cried, as if from the depths of an unfathomable despair. "What am I now? Where is my youth? I am a ghastly schemer at eighteen years of age. There is not a creature who loves me, except that poor, faithful Martha. I have not even a dog to trust me. It is all insult, suspicion, and misery."

She rose, took up the lamp, and went towards her own chamber.

There was a sudden draught, and the flame went out; its little light in pallid moonshine died.

Then she became aware of another faint glow that crossed the way before her.

A man preceded her at a considerable distance.

Sir Norman as surely as she lived!

With swift steps she was at his side.

"My father!" she exclaimed, laying a hand upon his shoulder.

It was a worn, gaunt, and sorrowful face that turned towards hers.

He stood for a moment mute.

Then he said:

"So you have followed me here—watched me here. Evelyn, you shall have your wish. I go to end my life in the sleeping-chamber of him, my friend, who was murdered beneath my roof. Let me look my last upon you, my daughter, whom I dearly loved. Could not any other hand have stabbed me?" he went on, taking one of hers, as if unconsciously, within his own. But he flung it away.

"Oh, Judas-girl!" he cried, "do not follow me. They might suspect the daughter, as they did the father."

Until now, morally paralysed, the young girl had been unable to utter a syllable.

But she found voice at last.

"What are you saying, my father?"

"Nothing; that is, no word more, to you, Evelyn."

"Where are you going?"

"To Henry Mainwaring's room."

"Ah, no!" she cried—shrieked, in fact, clinging to him, in spite of repulse, "not there! not there! What shall I say to hinder you? My father, for the sake of all that—Oh! my father, do not—"

And she sank at his feet, beseeching him, holding his hands.

"Are you afraid that I should see his ghost?" he asked, with a strange irony of manner.

"Would you be afraid to see mine, Evelyn? If so some people might hint that it was for the same reason. There are more ways of killing, my dear, than poisoning or stabbing, or strangling. Let me go!"

In that instant of time waves of agony rolled over the poor girl's heart. She would not release him.

"Will you speak?" he said.

"My father," she answered, rising, "I have never known, since I knew you at all, what it was to be except your loving and loyal daughter. But—and she trembled—"grant me one favour. Do not enter that room this night. Kiss me."

But he would not.

"Then promise me not to commit that crime which you spoke of just now, and I, your child, who have wronged you—"

"You confess it?" he interrupted, eagerly.

"Wronged you in suffering you to be wronged by others—will sacrifice my life rather than not remove the blight which has fallen upon you."

Tender and filial words which, if analysed,

would be found to possess no meaning whatever.

Still, hard and mocking he heard her out, and answered:

"I will not go there to-night, of course. My purpose has once more been balked by the vigilance of my daughter. As for the promise you require, Evelyn, I give it to you, for the present. Good-night, my amiable child."

Not her supplications, not her clinging caresses, not her tears, could restrain him. He almost violently threw her off, and went rapidly away.

"Shall I follow him?" she thought. "No, I must undo my last week's work. It might have killed him had he seen it. The man must be entrapped in another way. The risk to my father is too awful."

And, though with a hesitating step, she approached the room to which a dark crime had given a fame so fatal in the annals of Norman Chase.

Hush! there is something moving there—a light step, the door is opened in the dark, the faint glow of a lamp falls across the corridor.

Mathew Drake, stealthily as always, has gone in.

In less time than could be counted, a cry, resembling the human voice less than the howl of an animal, pierced the darkness; the man reappeared, fled down the passage, and fell upon his face, grovelling.

For, in that light room, more ghastly in the chiaroscuro than it would have been in the broad beams of the sun, there was a bed; on it a heap of rumpled coverlets, with, at the head of these, a pillow, and, half-muffled by the disordered sheet, sunken and discoloured, staring and distorted, the face of Henry Mainwaring.

Close by stood Martha Page.

"It was awful," she said, and she looked deadly pale.

Even Evelyn shuddered when she saw how real, in the rays of that flickering lamp, the semblance between life and death, which they had together prepared, was to the sight that had spread terror through Norman Chase on the night of Henry Mainwaring's murder.

"Did he speak?" she asked, in a low tone.

"Not a word. He looked, lifted his hands, fell back, and uttered that awful cry. Have you seen or heard nothing. I thought there were voices outside."

"I met my father. I wish I could find him now."

"It is impossible. You must go to bed, unless you would have a brain fever."

"Not until we have removed all trace of this horrible figure. I would not, for my life, that my father should see it."

In the course of a few minutes, nothing remained, except the aspects of an ordinary bed-chamber.

The old woman and the young girl then sought their room.

On the way they had to retreat stealthily up a by-passage to avoid a man who, shivering as it with ague, still crept along towards the very place he had so recently left in such mortal trepidation.

"What will he think," whispered Martha, "when he finds it gone?"

"He will be more than ever convinced," said Evelyn, with a bitter laugh, "that he has seen the ghost of the dead."

They watched and waited, but Mathew Drake made his appearance no more that night.

Evelyn had really accomplished nothing. She had extorted no confession from Drake. Nor any denial from her father.

(To be Continued.)

LORD BEACONSFIELD has recommended that the sum of £200 be issued from Her Majesty's Royal Bounty for the benefit of the widow and orphans of the late Thomas Humphreys, who so heroically lost his own life in saving that of another in Carmarthen Bay on January 29 last.

## THE KING OF ITALY.

THE German name borne by the present King of Italy is an old one in the family of Savoy, being that of Humbert surnamed White Hand, who is held to be the founder of their house. He lived at the Burgundian Court in the year 1,000, and received from the Emperor Conrad the districts of Savoy and Aosta. Humbert II. had the Duchy, which he considerably increased between 1,091 and 1,103, and Humbert III. reigned at the time of Barbarossa's campaigns against the Lombard cities, died a monk, and was placed by the predecessor of Pius IX. among the saints. After him no scion of the House of Savoy bore the name till Victor Emmanuel gave it to his son, thus connecting the lofty position his House now holds with its modest origin.

THE  
INVISIBLE COMMODORE;  
OR,  
THE SECRETS OF THE MILL.

## CHAPTER III.

A LONG, sharp schooner was standing on and off under easy sail to the eastward of Barbadoes.

An observer would have suspected that she was waiting for a signal or for a passenger from the island.

Her deck was covered with men of the most motley appearance, representing various nations, languages and complexions.

She carried a couple of "long toms" in plain view, one at each end. The racks at the foot of her masts were filled with pikes and edged weapons.

The smallest feature of the vessel, like the humblest individual aboard of her, was significant of her character. She was unmistakably a pirate.

She was, in fact, one of the two vessels which had chased the Alliance, Capt. Chuddley, into port, as that officer had reported to Governor Morrow.

No light was visible on this schooner—not so much as the glow of a cigar. Not a sound arose louder than a whispered order or the creaking of a block.

The hull of the pirate was painted a light blue, corresponding as nearly as possible to the usual colour of the sea.

Her sails had been bleached to a spectral whiteness, but were now begrimed with the smoke of recent battle.

There were serious traces of these late experiences in the woodwork and rigging, as well as in the aspects of the officers and crew. Several of the pirates had indeed been seriously wounded, but, with one or two exceptions, these unfortunates were as jolly and careless as their companions.

A slight commotion was suddenly perceptible along the deck, caused by the advent of the pirate commander from the cabin.

He was a man of herculean frame and ferocious aspect, yet of a sufficiently ordinary type of the men of his time and calling. A couple of large scars could have been remarked upon his visage, and part of the fingers of his left hand had been amputated in a fight, but he had all the appearance of a reckless and daring freebooter, who did not fear the face of day, and who found in his profession enough compensations to counterbalance all its dangers and drawbacks.

"The chase is over, boys," said the commander, as he advanced into the midst of his congenial spirits. "The Alliance has succeeded, in creeping into port. I think we can cut her out from under the guns of the forts, if we

should take it into our heads to do so, but I propose to let well enough alone for the present, and to await further orders from headquarters.

"The thing next in order is to lay in a good supply of rations, washing them down with plenty of grog, and to sleep as soundly as possible until morning, and so refresh ourselves from our long fatigues for the possible work of to-morrow!"

A low murmur of approval resounded along the deck, and the cook and steward of the schooner began circulating among the men with full baskets and bottles.

"Remember to keep very still, boys," added the pirate leader. "I am going to hug the shore of the island closely all night, in the presumption that we shall receive a signal or a visit, and I do not want the enemy to get the least hint of our presence!"

A characteristic scene of feasting and carousing was soon in progress.

Everyone who was hungry or thirsty had only to extend his hand and take what he desired.

The commander looked on with as much pride as pleasure.

"A fine lot of rascals," he muttered, addressing his lieutenant, a ruffian of aspect almost identical with his own. "And no wonder, when you think of it. The business pays them!"

"It does, indeed, captain," responded the executive. "And this last great victory will not only add immensely to the gold in our coffers, but will add even more notably to the terror of our name!"

"You have despatched another pigeon with the latest news, Lieutenant?"

"Not twenty minutes ago, sir."

"Then the commodore knows everything that has happened as well as we do ourselves, Lieutenant. Keep a sharp look out for advices from him. By the way, has the prisoner been visited since this morning?"

"No, sir; but I was just starting on that errand as you appeared among us."

"All right, Lieutenant. Look after this point immediately."

The lieutenant secured a basket of food from the galley, and entered the cabin, whence he passed into the hold through an opening in the bulkhead separating the cabin from the rest of the interior.

Producing a dark lantern, he flashed its rays beyond and beneath him, to an object that would at once have claimed all a visitor's attention.

This object was a cage composed of wood and iron, which had been constructed and suspended in the midst of the hold.

This cage was about three feet in width and height by five in length, and had been built in the most substantial manner, evidently for the safe-keeping of an important prize.

This prize was a man!

"Are you here, prisoner?" asked the lieutenant, flashing the rays of his lantern into the interior of the cage.

"Naturally, not being yet thin enough to crawl through a three-inch opening," was the answer of the prisoner, in a calm and firm voice which would of itself have attested a dauntless soul. "Did you expect me to have taken flight?"

"Well, no—I must confess," answered the lieutenant, laughing, as he held his lantern still nearer. "Nevertheless candour compels me to acknowledge that you continue as cheerful as if you expected to take your leave of us immediately."

"Men of my stamp do not die easily, lieutenant, and never by anticipation or before they are obliged to," assured the prisoner. "What's the news?"

"Nothing in particular. Here's a bite for you."

"Many thanks, of course. Please pass the same to me."

The lieutenant hastened to comply, thrusting various articles of food, including cold beef and hard bread, between the bars of the cage.

It would have been no easy task for a close observer to have noted the form and features of the prisoner at that moment with sufficient clearness for an adequate description.

It could have nevertheless been seen by the rays of the lantern carried by the pirate-lieutenant that the hapless victim was young and of noble and distinguished appearance.

The thinness and pallor of a long and terrible captivity could not have possibly escaped notice, nor could the courageous and haughty bearing of the unknown have been ignored by even a casual observer.

"I suppose your food, like your captivity, is getting slightly monotonous?" asked the pirate lieutenant.

"Oh, yes—slightly," was the quiet answer, as the prisoner began eating. "Will it be convenient, do you think, to allow me another bath to-morrow, if there are not too many sharks around the vessel?"

"Certainly—certainly if we should get becalmed, or have occasion to lie-to for a few moments, and more especially if we should come to anchor. You are aware of course that we all respect you as a brave man, prisoner, and that we are disposed to extend to you any favour we can consistent with your safe-keeping. At the first opportunity, therefore, I will take you out for a bath."

"I shall be glad to have it, Lieutenant," avowed the prisoner, continuing to eat quietly. "It will not only be a change, but a necessary act of cleanliness."

The lieutenant was silent a moment, he having turned his eyes attentively upon the ravages of a cannon-ball which had traversed the schooner from side to side during the recent battle, taking in its way the cage, which it had also traversed, leaving striking marks of its entrance and exit.

"That was a close call for you, prisoner," observed the lieutenant.

"Yes, sir," was the answer. "I happened to be lying down at the moment, or the ball would, in all probability, have traversed my body."

"Fortunately it did not harm your quarters beyond bending a bar or two out of shape," noted the lieutenant. "I do not see as the cage is any weaker or less safe for the performance. It is certainly as stout as ever," and he shook it with all his strength without making the least impression upon it. "Your irons, too, appear as firm as usual," and he passed his hand through one of the openings and felt of them. "Altogether I can report to the captain that affairs here are unchanged."

"If you please," said the prisoner, as quietly as before, continuing to eat with a nonchalance that extorted the tribute of the pirate's admiration. "I suppose I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again in the morning?"

"Certainly—if nothing happens."

And with this the visitor withdrew.

The prisoner was left in total darkness, but the start he gave—the sudden suspension of his repast as he found himself alone—would have fixed attention.

For a moment, listening intently, he looked in the direction in which the pirate lieutenant had vanished, and the form of the prisoner seemed to expand as he marked, by his acute sense of hearing, the situation of affairs around him.

"They are having another revel to-night," he muttered. "All work is over for the moment, and no sign of danger threatens. From all I have overheard during the day the schooner is off the island. The fact is proven, too, by the very suggestion of the lieutenant about coming to anchor."

Relapsing into silence, he continued during several minutes to follow with his hearing the proceedings on the deck of the schooner.

"She has tacked again," he murmured. "She is again nearing the land. Ah, what is that? A bustle and excitement, as of a signal from the shore. Perhaps now is my time."

Again he listened. His attitude became rigid in its fixity. He drew his breath hard.

"The hour has come to do or die," he mut-



tered. "These three long years of this horrible captivity have exhausted my powers of endurance, my patience, my reason. I shall go mad, if relief is not forthcoming. Better to die than to endure this martyrdom longer. Deceived again, Mr. Lieutenant," and the tone of his soliloquy showed that he was smiling grimly. "With all your cunning and watchfulness, you have not detected the slow toil which has been going on here for months past. Little do you suspect that I have worn out my very chains with my patience. Little do you imagine that I can at least take leave of this horrible prison."

He had been busy while these thoughts arose in a wild current to his lips, and now a final effort and movement sufficed to release his hands and limbs from the chains by which they had so long been wounded.

Then a single vigorous effort sufficed to bend aside one of the iron bars which had been sawed through near one end, and so secure an opening sufficient to admit of the prisoner's egress from the cage. The next moment he was free.

Free only from his personal duress, however. Free only as a lamb might be free in a den of wolves.

"I must and will make the effort to-night to escape," said the prisoner, under his breath, as he stood erect in the darkness of the hold. "Better to trust myself to an oar or to any piece of wood at hand, and attempt to swim ashore, than to die here a thousand deaths daily. Whatever the chances against me, and as many and terrible as they are, I will take them."

Holding his breath and continuing to listen, he noiselessly took his way in the direction of the passage through the bulkhead.

His glances had so often followed the retreat of the pirate-lieutenant by this route that even the profound darkness presented no difficulty to him.

The opening in the bulkhead was covered by a slide, but this slide had never been fastened, the prisoner was well aware, and in another moment he had safely gained the cabin.

"Now for clothing—arms," was the thought of the prisoner, as he listened again, standing motionless. "I must first disguise myself to resemble as nearly as possible one of these wretches, and then I must prepare myself to sell my life as dearly as possible, in case my escape is detected before I can get clear of the schooner."

Either his habit of following by his hearing the proceedings around him, or his familiarity with the arrangements of the cabin, stood him in good stead at this moment, for he did not have the least trouble in selecting from the effects of the pirate commander everything he required for a complete and comfortable change of clothing.

Having assured himself that the cabin was deserted at the moment, and that the scene upon the deck had deepened in busy intensity, he ventured to make a toilet to which he had long been a stranger, washing his face and hands thoroughly, and trimming his long hair and beard.

Then he secured a pair of pistols.

By the time he was ready to appear in a new character, and to present himself among the pirates as one of their number, he noted an increase of bustle and activity upon the deck, which was quickly followed by a faint sound alongside, which he knew to be caused by the arrival of a boat.

A fearful sense of dismay overwhelmed him.

"A visitor from the shore, no doubt," he said to himself. "I shall be detected!"

A single moment only he hesitated as to his course—whether to hide in the cabin or to escape to the deck—and then he decided upon the latter alternative.

In less time, therefore, than it takes to record the fact, he had glided up the dark companion-way into the midst of the pirates.

A busy scene met his gaze. A boat had indeed come off from the shore and been secured alongside, and a man had mounted the deck from it,

and was in the act of being received with every confidence and consideration by the pirate commander.

"Come into the cabin, visitor," said the latter, politely. "As well exchange news over a bottle as over a block."

The commander led the way below, followed by the visitor, and the pirates along the deck returned to the listless indifference from which they had been temporarily aroused by the boat's arrival.

Leaning over the low bulwarks and still perfectly unremarked, the escaped prisoner noted his surroundings as rapidly as minutely.

The deck was as crowded as ever, but many of the pirates had finished their drinking-bouts and gone to sleep, or were in the act of disposing themselves to slumber.

The calmness of the night and the gentleness of the breeze permitted a very small force to take good care of the schooner, especially under the circumstances in which she was placed, and hence there was now neither activity nor care to busy hands and eyes of the pirates.

Another moment of swift reflection, and the further action of the escaped prisoner was decided.

He began busying himself about the deck, as if belonging to the watch on duty.

Coiling the ends of two or three ropes, and assisting in hauling aft a sheet, he neared unobserved and unsuspected the taffrail, beneath which the boat of the visitor was tossing, secured by its painter to the schooner.

It was a small open boat, sharp at each end, and with a sail—fit only for use in a secure harbour and in the best of weather.

At sight of it the escaped prisoner suspected that the land was close at hand, and he glanced rapidly around the horizon in quest of it.

Sure enough, the dark outlines of a shore were visible at no great distance.

"It's my only chance," said the mysterious prisoner to himself. "I'll try it."

He glided off the taffrail with the celerity of a serpent, and lowered himself into the boat still unnoticed.

Concealing himself partly in the little cuddy forward, and partly under the sail which had been lowered, he waited the visitor's advent.

This period of waiting seemed an age, as was natural.

But eventually the visitor appeared on deck again, conducted by the pirate commander, and after an exchange of sundry unimportant remarks with that personage, swung himself easily into the boat, raised his sail, took his seat in the stern, and laid his course for the island.

The anxiety of the stowaway at that instant can be readily imagined.

(To be Continued.)

## FORCING PLANTS.

MR. SOWERBY gives some interesting facts as to the rapid growth of plants under forcing conditions. At the gardens of the Royal Botanic Society the water was let into the tank of the Victoria regia on February 10, and several varieties of Nymphaea, Nelumbium, Pistia, &c., planted. At the end of March the surface of the water was quite covered, and although only six plants of Pistia Stratiotes were put in, a good barrow-load (some thousand or so plants) had been cleared off. Seeds of the Victoria left in the mud have germinated, and the water is dotted over with the leaves of the young plants. Seeds of this plant have been sent out to Zanzibar, with the view of introducing the queen of water-lilies to the African lakes.

## AUTOGRAPHS.

At a sale of autographs held in Paris, the following prices were realised:

For the manuscript of Théophile Gautier's "Tricorn Enchanté," 460 francs were paid;

Victor Hugo's manuscript of "Hernani," with the author's corrections and censor's erasures, 320 fr.; the manuscript of Georges Sand's "Claudie," 100 fr.; a letter of Gérard de Nerval to Alexandre Dumas, 110 fr.; two lines of Victor Hugo's handwriting to Arago, 32 fr.; a Letter of Ponsard's, 50 fr.; Auber's receipt for nearly 13,000 fr. for the performance of the "Te Deum" at the baptism of the Prince Imperial, 100 fr.; a Letter of Gounod's, 26 fr.; a Letter in which Mademoiselle Mars relates a journey in the Pyrenees to Dumas, 250 fr.; a Letter of Talma's, 25 fr.; a Letter from Delacroix to Dumas, 51 fr.; a Letter from Rouget de Lisle, 32 fr., etc.

## SINNED AGAINST: NOT SINNING.

### CHAPTER XLIX.

Be patient. 'Tis thy woman's strength—  
Stifle that anguish-laden sigh;  
The world must hear it not, e'en though at length,  
Tired with the fight, thou liest down to die.

ULRICA did not expect to see anyone waiting for her, as it had been, even to the last, quite uncertain whether or not she could leave Mr. Dewsbury's.

It was not very far to walk, so, as they were preparing to leave the carriage she told Mr. Vincent that she would leave her travelling-bag at the station, whence it would be sent on to the rectory.

Ulrica Warner stepped out upon the platform.

The evening was beginning to close in—and her heart gave a great bound, and her brain a great swing—as she recognised Leopold Ormiston, standing but a few yards away from her.

At last—and at once, upon her arrival too!—she had caught sight of his beloved face—all the mad passion of the woman's soul asserted itself, and she forgot everything in her delirious joy at seeing again the idolised face and form, her love for which had led her into so much mental misery.

She saw him before he saw her. He was speaking to a guard, who presently, upon catching sight of Ulrica, evidently pointed her out to Leopold Ormiston.

He turned quickly, and, recognising her, came forward, raising his hat.

"How do you do, Miss Warner?" It was only this afternoon that the rumour reached Pendleton that you were amongst the sufferers from the collision, and I came down at once to make inquiries.

In the excess of her joy and emotion, Ulrica could scarcely speak.

Then he had been anxious about her after all!—that was her predominant feeling.

All suspicions, all recollections of the face of the woman she had seen with him—all—faded away from the mind of this strange and wary woman; she only recognised that the man she worshipped stood before her, and that—as far as she knew, and she wilfully blinded herself to the possibility that it might not be the case—that he had been solicitous about her welfare.

"Yes," she replied, as she gave him her hand, "I was one of the sufferers by the accident."

"I am so sorry, Miss Warner. Nothing very serious, I trust?"

"I was stunned, and yet feel a good deal shaken. Mr. Ormiston, can you tell me how my father is?"

"Yes," and as Leopold Ormiston spoke she saw his face light up, and a look of ineffable happiness come into his eyes as they evidently rested upon something or somebody infinitely delightful and pleasant for him to contemplate. "Yes, Miss Warner," but the tone in which he spoke to Ulrica did not correspond with the ex-

pression on his face, "I called at the rectory on my way here, and I am glad to say your father is not worse."

He moved a little to the back of the platform as he spoke, and Ulrica Warner instinctively followed him, unheeding that Mr. Vincent had just addressed the guard.

"Can you tell me," he asked, "is it far from this to where a Mr. Leopold Ormiston lives—at the Manor Farm?"

"There is Mr. Ormiston, sir," replied the guard, indicating Leopold; "he is talking to Miss Warner, the lady who travelled up with you."

The rector approached the two, saying:

"Miss Warner, will you do me the favour of introducing me to Mr. Leopold Ormiston?"

The ceremony was gone through, and scarcely had Ulrica spoken the customary conventional words, when a shrill voice behind her, said:

"Why, Ulrica! is it possible you are here! We heard you had been all but dashed to pieces in the collision."

"I was not exactly dashed to pieces, dear Lady Pendleton," said Ulrica, wondering what she and Everil were doing there, "but I was nearly shaken to pieces. However, as soon as ever I was able to travel I came on, because of my poor father's state. Good-evening, Everil."

"Good-evening, Ulrica"—spoken in a matter-of-fact way. "I hope you enjoyed your visit; it is unfortunate it has had such an unhappy termination."

"Yes, is it not?" and Ulrica looked pathetic. "But—may I ask—are you going to travel to-night?"

"Yes," replied Everil, in the same clear, indifferent voice, "we are going to London to complete the preparations for my marriage. I presume you know," she added, composedly, "I am to be married in September."

"I am sure, dear Everil, I wish you every joy," exclaimed Ulrica, with a throb of delight at knowing that Leopold Ormiston is listening to every word the girl says.

"Thank you, Ulrica. You must promise me that when I am Lady Rossmore you will come and see me."

"Of course she will," interposed Lady Pendleton, as she entered the carriage, where Mrs. Turrell was busily engaged in arranging the travelling wraps; "that is, unless she has got a house of her own to look after by that time."

How Ulrica wished the old lady were not in so unusually gracious a mood.

"Ah! of course, I see it all now!" exclaimed Lady Pendleton, peering out of the carriage door. "To be sure! There is Mr. Ormiston, he has come up to meet you, Ulrica. Ah! you silly girl! How do you do, Mr. Ormiston? I am very glad to see you!"

And Lady Pendleton affably smiled and nodded like a Chinese mandarin in a condescending mood, and held out her hand.

Leopold Ormiston raised his hat, and came nearer to the carriage a step or two, but he did not take the proffered hand.

Everil Vane entered the carriage at this juncture, and retreated to the farther end of it.

"I have heard of your good fortune, Mr. Ormiston," the old lady continued.

"May I ask what it is, Lady Pendleton? I am in ignorance of any stroke of good fortune having befallen me. At least," he added, correcting himself, "of none that the world in general knows of—"

"Ah! but I am such an old friend, and dear Ulrica and I are such companions," said the old woman, with her most juvenile air, "that of course dear Ulrica could not keep the good news from me."

"I am yet in ignorance, Lady Pendleton, as to what you allude to. What may be the good news concerning me which Miss Warner has told you of?"

"Why, your engagement to her, to be sure!" exclaimed the old woman, in her shrill treble. "And now, if you like to be married on the same day as Everil is, you can have the wedding breakfast at Pendleton Hall, and thus save yourselves the expense!"

Ulrica stood by listening in agony.

She expected Leopold Ormiston to give an unqualified and indignant disclaimer of all intention of the kind. Therefore, judge of her utter consternation, when she heard him quietly reply as the train moved off:

"Thank you, Lady Pendleton, for your most hospitable offer. The wedding shall be on the same day as Miss Vane's. Good-bye."

In sheer bewilderment Ulrica Warner listened to his words.

Did he mean to be insulting?

For half a minute she thought so, and her wrath rose up hot against him.

The next minute it had evaporated. The passionate woman could not give up the wild hope that the man she loved—for whom she had so bitterly sinned and suffered—loved her.

"My dear Miss Warner," said Mr. Vincent, at this juncture, "Mr. Ormiston has kindly invited me to stay at his house to-night. But you will let me see you home, first?"

"I see your phaeton here, Miss Warner," interposed Leopold Ormiston. "When I called at the rectory on my way, and told them I was going to try and find some news of my friend who suffered in the collision, it reminded your servant to send the phaeton, on the chance of your being in the train."

Ulrica's heart sank.

Then, after all, he had not been actuated by love for her in coming to the station, but came merely with a desire to know what had become of Henry Garthside.

How Ulrica Warner hated the man's name!

"That was thoughtful of them," replied Ulrica with quivering lips.

She was glad her veil and the dim light combined to keep her face from being distinctly seen, for she felt that it was blanched.

"Yes; I met your friend, Mr. Garthside, at Mr. Vincent's. He will be able to tell you all about him. He was considerably bruised and shaken, but the doctor hoped that in a few days he would be able to travel."

How devoutly Ulrica Warner wished that Henry Garthside might never again come face to face with Leopold Ormiston!

"That is fortunate. I am glad to see you have escaped so well, Miss Warner. Let me put your travelling bag into the phaeton."

"Thanks."

She took her seat, and wondered if he would make any reference to Lady Pendleton's words, or to his own extraordinary speech.

He did not long leave her in suspense.

"What a very hospitable speech that was of Lady Pendleton's; was it not?"

He stood with his hand on the handle of the phaeton door as he spoke, and looked straight into her face.

"Lady Pendleton is always hospitable," was the evasive reply, spoken calmly, although her heart beat wildly.

"Is she?"

"I have always found her so."

"Naturally; since she evidently finds so much pleasure in your society."

"She has always treated me very kindly."

How she wished the man would say something definite, or cease to torture her with these ambiguous speeches!

"Then you think of accepting her proposal, do you, Miss Warner?"

Ulrica was nearly mad! Great heavens! what did he mean?

"I must be guided by you," she exclaimed, bravely, goaded almost to desperation by his manner and words. "What do you think of doing?"

"I? Oh, pray don't take me into account, nor let me interfere with any of your arrangements upon that festive occasion."

"But you know I must!" she exclaimed under her breath, vehemently. "You know very well I must!"

"I don't see that you need do so at all. I certainly shall accept Lady Pendleton's invitation; but I don't see how that can in any way affect any arrangements you choose to make. If I can be of any service to you in any way, in consequence of the illness of your father, pray com-

mand my services. Good evening, Miss Warner. I hope you will find your father much better."

## CHAPTER L.

Oh, Love! sweet Love! What a power thou art  
That for ever thou liest concealed in my heart!  
In restless unrest,  
Deep in my breast,  
Thou dost nestle and lie, sweet Love!

As Leopold Ormiston spoke these last words he gave the signal for the man to drive on, so with a hurried farewell to Mr. Vincent, Ulrica was driven away, before she could say anything in reply to that last speech of Leopold Ormiston's.

She had very good grounds for thinking that he was flirting disgracefully with her, but she would not allow herself to think it even. She idly pondered over every word, trying to reconcile the inconsistencies of his words and of his acts, and could not arrive at any satisfactory solution of his conduct. Ulrica was nearly mad.

Mentally, she suffered the torments of Tantalus; for here was the cup of her life's happiness put to her lips every now and then, and each time when she tried to grasp it, she found it was but a phantom.

He did not deny to Lady Pendleton that he was not engaged to Ulrica; neither—she reflected—did he upbraid her in any way, nor allude to the presumed relationship between them.

So deliciously determined was she to possess herself of Leopold Ormiston at any cost, that she felt none of a woman's natural desire to stand well in every respect in the eyes of the man she adored.

For Ulrica Warner scarcely felt embarrassed at Lady Pendleton's speech to Leopold Ormiston. Her agony proceeded from the fear, and the certainty she felt, that he would then and there demand to know the whole story, and thus brand her as a liar.

The fear of thus irretrievably losing him was more potent than her fear of deteriorating in his esteem.

To do Ulrica Warner justice, were Leopold Ormiston her husband, no man could wish for a wife more devoted to his every wish, even to the anticipation of them, than Ulrica Warner would be.

But she would do so, not through self-sacrificing love, but because it selfishly would please her to do so.

The innately selfish nature of the woman rose always paramount to everything.

To obtain possession of this man, she was willing to sacrifice the feelings, mental and physical, of all who stood in the path between her and her desired end.

The phaeton stopped at the rectory gate, and Ulrica alighted to walk towards the house. As she passed through the wicket a trailing branch of roses swept against her hair, and as she inhaled their subtle sweet odour, she took them in her hand, and recognised the rebellious branch which Leopold Ormiston had once swept aside, and the roses from which she had gathered and kept because his hand had touched them.

The branch was again heavy with a delicious burden of blushing half-blown buds. Ulrica held it in her hand, and as she did so, although her father lay—perhaps dying—she could not resist murmuring half under her breath:

Do you remember it? For, oh! I do  
That lovely night in June—  
How cold your hand, how pale your face,  
By the wan light of the moon.  
Do you remember it? For, oh! I do  
The scent of flowers there!  
Was it the rose upon the tree, dear love?  
Or the red rose in your hair?

Have you forgotten it? I never can,  
Something I risked that night—  
Something I never can regret,  
For my heart said I was right!  
Do you remember it? For, oh! I do,  
That first, that sweetest kiss—  
Hold up your face—your lips to mine, dear  
love—  
It was such as this—and this!

Words not exactly applicable to what had



passed between them, yet, for her life, Ulrica Warner could not help standing there with the rose-branch in her hand, whilst she softly crooned them.

Ulrica was unfeignedly shocked at the appearance her father presented.

Tired though she was, she decided to sit up with him for the night.

So she took a warm bath to refresh her, and, arranging herself in a comfortable dressing-gown, took her place by her father's bedside.

He was quite unconscious of her presence, and lay there breathing stertorously.

He did not require much attention, and having received all directions from Jane relative to nourishment and medicines to be administered, she dismissed the maid, and sat down in the dimly-lighted room.

Ulrica soon became conscious that she had overtaxed her nerves in every way.

The terrible strain upon her mind, and the shock of the stunning railway accident, and the sudden news of her father's illness, combined with her interview in the train with Mr. Vincent and the strange ways and words of Leopold Ormiston, all began to be strangely jumbled up in her mind, and her head swam so that she could scarcely see the dim lamp in the corner of the room.

She got up, bathed her head and face with plenty of cold water, and then softly leaving the room, soon returned with her book of shorthand notes and pencil.

Seating herself beside the lamp, Ulrica Warner put down every jot and tittle of all recent events, even to the conversation which had passed between Lady Pendleton, Leopold Ormiston and herself.

Then, to refresh her memory, and to enable her to keep the threads of her plot in their places, and to hinder them from interlacing, she read over the cypher account from the very beginning.

Her head still felt very queer.

She rose from her seat as she looked at her watch, and saw that it was time to give her father his medicine.

No sooner did she stand up than she was terrified to find that her limbs sank under her, and it was with difficulty she was able so far to command herself as to be able to pour out the medicine.

Having administered it she sat down again, and resumed the perusal of her cipher book.

But her brain refused to work—the book fell from her hands, and she lay back in her chair exhausted.

The early morning sun shone upon the faces of a dead man and of an unconscious woman!

Meantime, Everil and her grandmother had performed the first stage of their journey to London.

They stopped for the night at the chief hotel in Camberborough, a large cathedral town on the line.

"Well," said Lady Pendleton, as in the most gorgeously-braided of travelling-dresses she sat sipping chocolate in a private sitting-room of the hotel. "Now, you see, all is settled between Ulrica Warner and her father."

Everil Vane—her lovely figure shown off to the utmost advantage by her plain serge travelling dress—was seated at the end of the room, looking over some of the multifarious out-of-date publications usually to be found in hotel sitting-rooms.

Why is it that they always have the "Punch" of exactly six months before in such places? Do they get a supply at "a reduction by taking a quantity?"

"I should rather be inclined to say you have settled it quite to your own satisfaction, grandmother," was the significant reply.

"I don't quite understand you, Everil."

"I thought I spoke plainly enough. I said, and I can only repeat, that you seem to have settled the fact of Mr. Ormiston's marriage to Ulrica Warner quite to your satisfaction."

"And evidently to his satisfaction, also," replied the old lady, with a lurking hope that

Everil might be annoyed at the conversation being thus prolonged.

"No doubt."

Everil spoke in a provokingly calm and indifferent manner. But then, Everil, at least, so her grandmother said to everyone, was always a provoking girl when she liked, and so sweet and good also when she liked.

"I should not think there was any doubt upon the subject," pursued Lady Pendleton, complacently; "not the least shadow of a doubt whatever. Did you not hear with what evident delight he accepted my proposal to have the wedding upon the same day as yours, and to have the breakfast up at Pendleton Hall?"

"No," in the same provokingly careless manner, and then Everil seemed to concentrate all her faculties upon looking for the next consecutive number of "Punch."

"Nonsense, girl," exclaimed Lady Pendleton, testily; "you must have heard it. But, as I often and often have said before, you are selfish, you take no interest in anyone's affairs but your own. Well, I thank providence that I have a heart that can feel with the joys and sorrows of another."

Everil seemed to have attained what was, for the time being, apparently the object of her life.

"Possibly your estimate of my character may be a true one, grandmother."

Wad some power the giftie gie us  
To see ourselves as others see us."

she continued, with actually something like merriment in her fresh, young, clear voice; "so said Burns, and so say I. I think I am only simply honest when I say I really do not take the very least interest in the marriage of Ulrica Warner."

Everil again bent her head over the paper, whilst Lady Pendleton remarked, sententiously and pitifully:

"Ah, you are not like what I was when I was a young, simpleminded girl. Why, the very idea of the marriage of a dear girl friend would occupy my thoughts entirely."

"Ulrica Warner was never a dear girl friend of mine," returned Everil, decidedly. "I have never cared for Ulrica Warner."

At this juncture Mrs. Turrell appeared with the bedroom candlesticks, and thus put an end to a disagreeable conversation.

## CHAPTER LI.

Sweeter to this afflicted breast  
The thought of never-ending rest;  
Sweeter the undisturbed and deep  
Tranquility of endless sleep.

LONGFELLOW.

ULRICA WARNER did not become unconscious all at once.

Her condition, mentally, was pitiable. She had just sufficient of her senses left to realise her state.

Ulrica knew her crafty brain refused now to work—refused to be kept in subjection by her iron will.

It worked independently of her; irrelevant thoughts flitted through her mind; fantastic shapes danced before her eyes, and she could actually scarcely avoid saying the foolish and extraordinary things which occurred to her mind.

This terrified her. In the silence of the night she listened to her father's stertorous breathing; to his feeble and plaintive moans, and Ulrica realised with dismay that she had no powers of volition; was unable to rise and to attend to his wants.

And then—mentally and physically—a great cloud seemed to swoop down upon her, and Ulrica Warner became utterly unconscious.

In such wise was she discovered in the morning, when the affrighted servants also discovered that their master had gone beyond the reach of human joys and sorrows.

The rider on the pale horse had been there and had taken the good old rector from the evil to come.

The doctor was immediately sent for, and Ulrica was put to bed.

At first it was supposed the shock of her father's death, for they supposed she was aware of it, had stunned her.

But evening came on, and there was no sign of consciousness. Night followed, and Ulrica Warner lay there raving in brain fever.

There she lay, sick unto death, in the very room in which she had listened to the wanderings of Muriel Oliphant, and had plotted her death.

The mills of God grind slowly—  
But they grind exceeding small;  
He is patient too that worketh,  
And with patience grinds out all.

We cannot fly from fate, and Nemesis had overtaken Ulrica Warner, in part.

In the midst of her ravings she frequently alluded to her cipher book; until at length Doctor Gordon made inquiries as to what it was.

"It must be this book, sir, with the queer writing in it," said Jane, producing the book which had fallen from Ulrica's hand when she became unconscious.

"Of course it is."

The doctor opened it and was puzzled. He—good man—had never before seen anything of the kind, and he took it over to the window to examine it more deliberately.

He did not understand a single thing in it, but it greatly enhanced Ulrica Warner's abilities, in his private opinion, to be able to write in that way.

"Do you think this is of importance?" inquired Doctor Gordon.

"Law, sir! I should just think so!" exclaimed Jane. "Why, Miss Warner always kept it locked up so careful, sir."

"Then you have seen the book before?"

"Oh, yes, sir."

"Miss Warner showed it to you?"

"Yes, sir. I was in the room one day, sir, and—" Jane looked bashful.

"Well, my good girl, 'what else?'"

"Why, sir, I suppose I was curious, but I asked Miss Warner what it was she was writing, sir."

"And she explained it to you?"

"No, sir, not exactly." Miss Warner laughed, "and said it was a way she had of writing that no one else but herself could understand."

More and more was Ulrica's intellect admired by the unsuspecting doctor.

"It is doubtless of consequence," said he to Jane, "so I think I shall take charge of it until Miss Warner's aunt and uncle arrive."

And thus it came to pass that Doctor Gordon put the record of Ulrica Warner's guilt in his pocket; in the very room, and standing in the same place by the very window, where she had plotted the murder of her victim.

It was rather late when Doctor Gordon left the rectory, and walked meditatively down the road; his heart filled with sorrow for his old friend just gone, and with concern about Ulrica.

"Poor thing!" he said to himself. "I wish her aunt and uncle were come. It is too bad for her to be here ill, without any of her relatives with her. She must have been greatly attached to her father, his death has affected her so deeply. Poor thing! Poor thing! But of course the shock has had something to do with it."

Thus the good man ruminated. Her incoherent ravings he paid no attention to.

Ulrica repeatedly exclaimed that "she" was falling over the edge of the cliff, and this the doctor considered to refer to some incident of the explosion.

The doctor had not proceeded very far when he encountered Leopold Ormiston coming towards him rather hurriedly, and with an unmistakable look of anxiety upon his face.

"My dear doctor!" exclaimed the young man, turning back and walking along with him. "I have just been at your house looking for you, and heard you were at the rectory, so I was going on to you there."

"Anything the matter, my boy?" inquired



## [WORD FENCING.]

the doctor, putting his arm through that of Leopold Ormiston.

"Not very much," was the reply; "but I want you to come home with me for a few minutes. Sad affair about our poor friend, Mr. Warner."

"Wonderfully sad. I had no idea he would have gone off so quickly. I thought it likely he might have had another stroke of paralysis, but I never expected this one would have carried him off so quickly. I pity that poor girl, Miss Warner, continued the doctor. "She is raving there in brain fever, talking nonsense, and continually exclaiming that some one is falling over a cliff. Some painful incident, I presume, connected with the railway accident."

Leopold Ormiston listened attentively. Surely here was another link in the chain of evidence he was so secretly, and so laboriously, trying to collect.

But he determined to keep his own counsel, until the time was ripe, and therefore merely said:

"It is a very sad affair altogether, and I may as well tell you, doctor, that I want you to come and see another victim of the railway accident. Poor Garthside, the man I mentioned to you about."

"Yes, yes, I remember," said the doctor sympathetically; "but I did not think the poor fellow, from all I heard, was in a state to be removed."

"I admit it was a risk," replied Leopold Ormiston, "but there were certain reasons why I was anxious to bring him up here. Therefore, I went down to the scene of the accident the first thing this morning. I found him quite sensible, but weak and shaken. However, having obtained the doctor's permission, rather unwillingly granted, I admit I took him home here with me, and I now want you to come and see him."

"Indeed I will," replied the doctor, heartily, and so chatting, they reached Leopold Ormiston's dwelling, and entered the comfortable oak-wainscoted parlour.

A real farmhouse parlour, with framed samplers and other specimens of the work of bygone female progenitors, ornamenting the walls.

The chairs had old-fashioned white dimity covers, with flounces round them, and a general perfume of dried rose leaves and lavender pervaded the air.

There were three people in the parlour when the doctor and Leopold Ormiston entered—two women and a man.

The women were Muriel Oliphant and Margaret Power, and the man was Henry Garthside.

The latter, propped up with pillows, lay upon the capacious old square sofa, whilst Muriel Oliphant reclined in an armchair at the other side of the fireplace.

By the shaded lamp on the table Margaret Power sat knitting, but rose as Leopold Ormiston and the doctor entered.

"Here is your patient, doctor," said Leopold, after he had introduced all the occupants of the room to him. "Indeed I think I may say here are two patients for you, for Mrs. Oliphant is rather knocked up again since she heard of the accident."

The doctor spoke kindly and reassuringly to the two invalids. But he could not conceal from himself the fact that each was in an exceedingly precarious condition.

"You are accustomed to nursing?"

The doctor spoke to Margaret Power, whose professional manner he at once detected.

"Yes, sir"—Margaret Power hesitated for a minute, but then her mother wit came to the rescue, and she continued: "Mrs. Oliphant has been delicate for some years, and I have been her attendant, sir."

"Margaret," said Leopold Ormiston, as he laid his hand on Muriel Oliphant's shoulder. "I have determined that Doctor Gordon shall know all. Call Mr. Vincent."

Mr. Vincent promptly obeyed the summons; and Leopold Ormiston introduced him to the doctor.

"First of all, doctor, in the presence of Mr. Vincent, Margaret Power and myself—do you consider Mrs. Oliphant and Mr. Garthside to be perfectly sane, and capable of giving a coherent account of some peculiar circumstances in their lives?"

"Bless my soul, yes," replied the somewhat mystified doctor "as competent as you are."

"Doctor," said Leopold Ormiston, taking him aside, "they both seem so weak that I have hurried on the matter. It is of imminent importance that not one jot or tittle of what they have to tell should be lost."

"You were right to take immediate measures," replied the doctor in a low tone; "they are both perfectly sane, but in an extremely weak state. The sooner any business is transacted the better. If I can be of any service I shall be most happy."

"Thank you, doctor. I knew I could rely upon you."

Leopold Ormiston returned to the side of the room where Henry Garthside, looking almost like a shadow, lay upon the sofa.

He laid upon the table pens, ink and paper, and then said:

"Doctor, there are some extraordinary disclosures to be made. For the present it is absolutely necessary that they should be kept private. We want your testimony as a medical man that these two invalids are of sound mind at the time of making these statements."

The doctor readily complied with Leopold Ormiston's request. He gave the required certificate, and then Mr. Vincent said:

"Who is to take down whatever we each depose?"

"I will," readily replied Leopold Ormiston, arranging the paper before him. "When I was a lad, we had a sort of universal genius here as schoolmaster of Rossmore, and he taught me a sort of cipher or shorthand. I have made use of it frequently since, so I daresay I can utilise it now."

(To be Continued.)





[THE BRIEF.]

## THE LORD OF STRATHMERE; OR, THE HIDDEN CRIME.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

Few attain where many strain  
To clutch the higher prize.

"How are you to-day, my poor fellow?" asked Lord Strathmere, approaching Crowl. "You look quite ill still. You were surely not able to be moved."

"I am the best judge of that," returned Crowl, grimly. "I stand a better chance of getting well here, I fancy."

The governor coloured. He glanced at the sailor.

"I should like to see you alone," he remarked.

"Jim," said Crowl, without raising his head, "you can go in the next room. You can stay within call, you know, in case I need you."

The sailor nodded and withdrew into the adjoining room, closing the door behind him.

Lord Strathmere, in a quick survey of the seaman, had seen that he was an honest, sturdy fellow, who could by no means be brought under evil influence.

"How did you pick him up?" he asked, abruptly.

"Easily enough," replied Crowl. "I required a man to look after me, and the landlord here recommended to me a sailor who was out of regular employment, and who had been doing odd jobs about the inn for his board. Jim is tired of the sea, and wants to settle out here, and bring out his wife and children, so I struck a sort of bargain with him. I like him and he likes me. He's a regular bull-dog of a man.

An assassin would have hard work to get at me over my new bodyguard," Crowl added, significantly.

"You seem always harping on assassins and poisons," said the governor, irritably. "I should think, with your fears, you would leave Sydney."

"I intend to within a week."

"Indeed? Where shall you go?"

"I don't know yet. I haven't decided, and when I do I shall not leave my address behind me," said Crowl, drily. "When my year is up, and I want my second payment, I can let you know, or I can call upon you, as I think best. The less we see of each other in the interim the better."

"You are right," said the baron, with a look of relief. "As your wife knows everything, I can speak out freely before her. I have made it to your interest to be faithful to me. If you were to betray me, I should denounce you as conspirators and blackmailers, and have you sent to Norfolk Island."

"We are not now in England. I am absolute here, the representative of majesty, and I can utterly destroy you both as I would crush an egg-shell, and no one would ever call me to account. I am powerful, and you two are of lower class, and have no friends to interest themselves in your fate. I hope you realise all this?"

"We do," said Meg, trembling.

"That is well. Upon this basis, we can come to terms. I have brought with me the two thousand pounds I promised. Here it is!"

He produced a leathern bag filled with gold coins and Bank of England notes and dropped it on the couch. Crowl seized it with a pretence of eagerness, opened it, and began to count the money.

The governor regarded him with satisfaction.

"It is a very large sum," said his lordship. "A monstrous fortune for the son of a poor village pedagogue, Crowl."

"Relatively no larger for me than the Strathmere inheritance is for you," interrupted Crowl,

coolly. "It's the same thing in both cases—blood-money."

Lord Strathmere scowled.

"You had better be civil," he exclaimed. "I suppose now that I have paid for your silence, I can depend upon it. If I have committed a crime, you are accessory to it, and as liable to punishment as I. If I am deep in the mud, you are as deep in the mire. Besides, who would believe in the word of a self-confessed burglar against that of Baron Strathmere, Governor of New South Wales?"

"My word unsupported would be worse than valueless," said Crowl. "I realise that. Meg and I are of no account beside an English peer. We shall keep on the safe side. No Norfolk Island for me! Now, Meg, help me count!"

He spread out the banknotes and gold in glittering and profuse array.

Lord Strathmere's suspicions, if he had had any, of the good faith of Crowl, were completely set at rest by the fellow's artfulness.

He was about to take his leave, well satisfied with his morning's work, when the door opened and Dr. West entered the room.

The governor's swarthy visage reddened with vexation at being discovered in Crowl's lodging.

"Good-morning, my lord," said the surgeon, courteously. "I see that you are prompt to visit your sick servant—"

"Yes," said the baron, eagerly. "Crowl saved my life once in old England, and he has a sort of claim upon me—"

"Which your lordship seems to have repaid with interest," remarked Dr. West, glancing at the couch. "You seem to have endowed Mr. Crowl with a great fortune."

The governor bit his lips with chagrin.

"It is not so great as it looks," he said, hastily. "It is a last recognition of Crowl's claim upon my gratitude. He is going to leave Sydney. Ah, by the way, doctor, your patient had some vagary in his head yesterday about poisoning. He tells me that he declared to you that I—ha! ha! I poisoned him! Was any—"

thing ever more preposterous? I suppose that these vagaries are familiar to you, in your capacity of physician? Crowl is himself again, and he wishes to say to you that his little delusion was delirium. Eh, Crowl?"

"Of course, Dr. West would not believe anything against you, my lord, on my statement," said Crowl, looking up, a red flush drifting across his pallid face. "I am not responsible for words uttered in delirium, am I, doctor?"

"Certainly not. When you uttered your accusation against his excellency, I thought you must be mad," said the doctor, truthfully; for belief in Crowl's truthfulness had come later. "My lord, when you shall have had as much experience with invalids as I have had, you will let half of their utterances go in one ear and out of the other. How are you feeling to-day, Mr. Crowl?"

"Weak, doctor—very weak."

"I shall have to recommend you to try a change of air," said Dr. West. "A sea-voyage to America, a trip to Melbourne, something for a complete change. How about the draught, Mrs. Crowl? Were they taken regularly?"

The governor, completely satisfied, again arose to go.

He invited Dr. West to dine with him, deeming a little extra attention to the surgeon-civilty well expended.

He told Crowl that he would send around daily to inquire after his health, and took his leave.

As his carriage rolled down the street, Dr. West looked out upon it with a queer smile.

"He's completely taken in," he remarked. "His countenance was full of complacency and self-importance as he drove away. Great Heaven! what hypocrites this world contains. The worst villains are not all in the prisons!"

"I have taken his money, doctor," said Crowl, helplessly; "what am I to do with it?"

"Put it back in the bag, as you received it, and put it in the bank for safe keeping," said the doctor, decisively.

Meg crowded the gold and bank-notes into the leathern receptacle.

"I will deposit it in your name," continued Dr. West. "It must lie in bank until justice is done, and Mr. Chandos comes to his own again. This money does not belong to the man who gave it to you. Ralph Chandos is rightfully Lord Strathmere. All the Strathmere money, rents, inheritance, belong to him, and there will be had a strict accounting when he comes into the barony. This being his money, must be held for him."

"Then put it into the bank in his name," said Crowl.

The doctor shook his head.

"I don't think it best," he said. "Being a convict, it might be taken from him."

"Then deposit it to my credit," said Crowl; "and when Mr. Chandos becomes Lord Strathmere I'll give it up to him. I am going to be honest, Doctor. What with Meg here, and the parson, and the remembrance of the dear old father at home, I'm completely broken up in my old ways. I mean to be upright and respectable. I seem just to have awakened to the fact that this life isn't all the life there is, and that there is to be a judgment."

"And I mean to make a home for Meg and the old father. Bless him! He'd cross a thousand seas to come to me, his only child. And he'd nearly die with joy to learn that his prayers had been answered, and that I am, as he's so long prayed for, a brand plucked from the burning. I'll be a credit to him yet!" added Crowl, with tears in his eyes.

"Why not send for him by the next vessel?" asked the doctor. "The 'Queensland' is up for next week. Send in her for the old father."

Crowl's face lighted up, then gloomed.

"We have no home," he said. "The old man's dream all his life has been to live on a farm, and have sheep, and cattle, and sunshine, and fresh air, and he would not like Sydney. And I wish to leave this town, and hide myself somewhere until Dr. Marsh returns. He will

be absent many months, and I ought to use the time to advantage."

"I know the very place for you," said Dr. West. "You will be out of the governor's knowledge, and can be making a home for your father and yourselves. Dr. Marsh bought a sheep-run up country named Garra-Garra. He has been obliged to leave it, and if Mr. Chandos regains his rights the doctor will never return to it. It's a splendid farm, well-watered and stocked, and in five years you could get rich off it."

Crowl's face beamed. Meg looked doubtful.

"I heard that the blacks were bad up there," she said, "and that Dr. Marsh came away in consequence of a serious wound they gave him."

"That's all true. The hill tribe of blacks were disaffected on account of the treachery of the original settler of Garra-Garra, a man named Mackenzie. But I had a visit from the black hunter yesterday, who helped Chandos bring in Dr. Marsh months ago. This hunter came to urge the return of Marsh and Chandos. It appears that there has been a fight between Wymerie's tribe and the hill-people, and the latter were routed with great loss. Their chief and principal men were killed, and Wymerie followed up his victory by making with the survivors a treaty that the white men were not again to be molested, so long as the whites kept on their side of the line. This treaty was sworn to by all the oaths these aborigines hold sacred, and the hunter says no harm shall come to the settlers, and he implores them to return to Garra-Garra. Wymerie, thanks to the doctor's kind treatment of him, is now a warm friend to the whites."

Crowl and Meg looked thoughtfully at each other.

"At Garra-Garra you will have the seclusion you want, with a life of rude luxury and plenty," went on Dr. West. "You can care for the flocks, with the native herders. I take upon myself the responsibility of putting you in charge, and I can promise you safely that when Mr. Chandos is free he will present you with the deed of Garra-Garra."

Crowl's eyes sparkled with delight.

"The hut which the doctor occupied was destroyed by the hill-blacks," resumed the doctor, "but the hunter says that Wymerie has caused it to be rebuilt exactly as it was before. The hunter is still at my house. Say the word, Crowl, and I will send you and your wife to Garra-Garra under his guidance, as future master and mistress."

"We will go gladly," cried Crowl. "Oh, doctor, it seems as if heaven were opening to us."

"A home of our own!" said Meg, half sobbing with joy. "And land, and stock—oh, it all seems too good to be true!"

"And the old father out here to live with us!" ejaculated Crowl. "Ah, this will be better than all the idleness and splendour of the life I craved."

"You could take your sailor along as herder, or partner, if you like," suggested the doctor. "The farm is large enough for a dozen squatters, and the sheep run is very extensive."

"We'll take him," declared Crowl, "and send out for his family by the same ship by which I send for father. Heaven bless you, Doctor. You've made a good many happy."

The sailor was called in and informed of Crowl's plans, under promise of secrecy. His joy was equal to that of his new friend. The doctor departed, and the three intending squatters spent the remainder of the day in writing letters to the dear ones at home.

Crowl had plenty of money in his purse, which he had obtained on various occasions from the governor, and he sent Meg to the shipping-office to pay for the necessary number of return passages in the "Queensland," the swift-sailing vessel now up for sailing the next week, and which was announced to return to Sydney after a very brief stay in London.

These tickets, in case the return of the "Queensland" should for any reason be deferred, were transferable to the first ship leav-

ing the English port after the "Queensland's" arrival home, so they were considered a very safe investment, and duly enclosed in the letters, which Meg herself mailed at the post-office.

The next day a convict-servant in livery, from Government House, called to inquire after Mr. Crowl's health, in the name of Lord Strathmere.

Upon this day Dr. West purchased two horses, a good ox-team and waggon and properly stocked it for the new settlers.

Dr. Marsh's oxen were still at Garra-Garra, as was also his waggon, but they were not available for the use of Crowl.

The recovery of the invalid was very rapid. Upon the third day after his arrival at the "Royal George," he settled his hotel bill and drove down to one of the quays with Meg and his sailor friend.

They had procured passage on a vessel sailing that day for Melbourne, but although they had booked themselves, paying for their berth, they had no intention of going in her.

They waited until the vessel for Melbourne had weighed anchor and moved out upon the waters of Port Jackson, and then they quickly transferred themselves to a vessel plying on the river between Sydney and Paramatta, and were transported to the latter place.

Upon arriving at Paramatta they found the black hunter and their horses, waggon and ox team in waiting for them, and they set out upon their journey to Garra-Garra, camping out at night and driving leisurely during the long, pleasant days.

They arrived at their destination in safety, and found Wymerie and his followers waiting to receive them.

The disappointment of the blacks at not seeing Chandos and Dr. Marsh was appeased by the many presents Dr. West had sent to them, and the new settlers were installed in their hut with rejoicings, and a new treaty of friendship was made.

The black hunter, the cook Walla, and the herders were engaged by Crowl to continue in his service, and he and his companions entered upon a life that seemed to them scarcely inferior to existence in Paradise. Crowl's resolutions to become a good and honest man were daily strengthened.

No temptations here assailed him to do wrong, and Meg daily thanked Heaven upon her knees that reckless Tom had been indeed "a brand plucked from the burning."

The day after the departure of Crowl and his party from the "Royal George," the liveried convict-servant from Government House called at the inn to make his usual inquiries. He was told that Crowl had gone to Melbourne, and so reported to his master.

Lord Strathmere had stricter inquiries made, and discovered that Crowl had actually taken passage for Melbourne, his name being on the ship's list of passengers.

This was sufficient; he had no doubt that Crowl had gone to Melbourne, and gave himself no further uneasiness about him.

"He's rid of!" he said to himself. "And I have discovered that Dr. Marsh has been compelled to return to England invalided. He's had to give up his convict protégé and look after his health. I have a clear field now. Not an enemy to balk or defeat me. I'll get rid of Chandos. Nothing but his death will now content me. And I'll win Gerda Pelham to be my wife. I have got a scheme that will bring her to terms!" and his eyes glittered balefully. "We'll see what the next few days will bring forth. I am very near the summit of success!"

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The dearest girl in all the world.  
Treading life's walk with me.

An unusual press of business occupied the attention of Lord Strathmere during the week that followed, to the exclusion of his own personal schemes.



There were despatches to be sent on the "Queensland"—important reports which could not be delayed—and he bent all his energies, as did Mr. Carew, to the fulfilment of his official duty.

But after the "Queensland" had sailed he gave his own personal affairs due prominence.

He had despaired of ever winning Gerda Pelham's free consent to marry him. Despised, outcast, dishonoured, a convict, yet Ralph Chandos still held all her heart, and Lord Strathmere knew it.

He could not win her love, yet he was determined to possess her.

He loved her with a desperate and increasing passion.

Her father favoured his suit.

With the proper pressure brought to bear upon her, the governor did not doubt his ultimate success.

The pressure must be effected through her unfortunate lover. Ralph Chandos would prove a mighty lever, if properly and effectively employed.

Lord Strathmere called again at the hospital. Ralph Chandos was still a patient there, but was not confined to his bed.

To the contrary, he was up and dressed, and but for his pallor and thinness seemed as well as ever.

The governor's brows contracted at sight of him.

"Why is this convict kept in hospital, Captain Archer?" asked his lordship, abruptly. "He looks well—as healthy as an elephant."

"Dr. West has ordered—"

"Hang Dr. West. He's a friend of that old Marsh, and for his sake wants to favour Chandos. But we'll have no favouritism here!" he declared, violently. A convict is a convict, whatever his former condition of life. This one will have to turn out of this."

"Yes, my lord," said Captain Archer, with a troubled look. "But Dr. West says that Mr. Chandos should be careful—"

"Mr. Chandos!" sneered Lord Strathmere. "You seem very polite to convicts, Capt. Archer."

The captain coloured.

Miss Pelham had appealed to him to be kind to her lover, whom she had declared innocent of the crime for which he had been condemned, and her appeal had found a soft place in his heart. The doctor had adjured him to treat Chandos with care and kindness, and Col. Gurney had ordered that our hero should be kept in hospital and well-treated until he should decree otherwise.

Col. Gurney possessed influence and importance, and every official yielded to his demands.

"I think, Captain Archer," continued the governor, "that I am supreme here, and that there is no one quite daring enough to contest my authority."

"Certainly not, my lord," stammered Archer.

"Then see that this prisoner is set to work with his fellows. It behooves me, who am unfortunately his relative, to see justice done in his case. No one shall accuse me of paltering with my duty. I am a Brutus, sir, a Brutus!" and he struck his breast a resounding blow.

"A brute, more like!" muttered Captain Archer, sotto voce.

"What did you say, sir?"

"I said that it was very noble," said Captain Archer, with a very red face. "It's very Roman, and all that, my lord, and I suppose you feel that you couldn't do otherwise, considering your position: but Chandos is not like the other convicts, and after his long illness it seems cruel to compel him to herd with them. I understand that he has never associated with convicts, either on the voyage out or since."

"So much reason why he should be forced to associate with them now. He's petted and coddled, but we've had enough of that. He was sentenced to transportation for life, with hard labour, I believe, and I shall see that the sentence is executed. No one shall justly charge me with favouritism."

"No one would dream of doing so, my lord," said Archer, with rather an ambiguous smile.

"I should hope not. As I understand the law, this convict should not have been 'assigned' upon his arrival. There's a laxity about the laws which I shall hasten to remedy. If it had not been for the ridiculous stories of the fellow's courage, and all that, and the sympathy they created for him, he'd have been put to hard labour in the prison, or with the other convicts. I order that he shall be sent to work upon the quays with the gang there employed!"

Captain Archer looked aghast.

"Why, my lord," he exclaimed, "the exposure would soon kill him!"

"Pray, who appointed you judge in this matter?" demanded Lord Strathmere, sharply. "We'll have no petted convicts here. If Chandos had wished to escape punishment, he should not have committed murder!" and he looked insolently at his unfortunate young cousin.

Chandos was deathly pale. His eyes blazed with a passionate fury, like living fires amid snow.

"You know that I never committed murder, Norman Brabazon!" he breathed, in a low, suppressed voice. "You know who murdered our poor old uncle—"

Lord Strathmere's eyes emitted sudden lightning.

His swarthy face glowed with his awful and unreasoning hatred of Chandos.

"Be careful what you say!" he hissed, "I am master here, young man!"

"The wicked shall not always triumph!" said Chandos, in a tone scarcely above a whisper.

"You say that to me? You defy me?"

"Yes, I do!" cried Chandos, suddenly blazing.

"Coward! To taunt and mock a man who is powerless to defend himself. Wretch!" ejaculated Chandos, losing all sight of prudence in his righteous indignation. "Scoundrel—hypocrite—murderer!"

Lord Strathmere, with a half-articulate cry, leaped toward his cousin and struck him across the face with his cane.

In an instant, Chandos had hurled himself upon him.

All the wrongs of the poor young fellow were fresh in his mind.

His cousin had robbed him of all life had held dear for him; he had made him an outcast and a convict.

He intended to herd him with the worst felons at Sydney.

When strangers strove to befriend him, his kinsman was determined to heap upon him the last touch of ignominy, shame, and anguish.

He did not know of the late occurrences at Government House, of the new influences at work in his favour—Dr. West had not dared to tell him lest after all Dr. Marsh should fail in his mission—but he now absolutely believed Brabazon to be his uncle's murderer. Gone were Chandos's unnatural patience and apparent submission.

Lightning leaped from his eyes; his passions were at white heat.

He flung the governor from him against the wall as if he had been a stuffed image, he buffeted him, he flung him to the floor, where he lay for an instant as if dead, blood streaming from his face.

Then, and not till then, did Chandos realise what he had done. He stood upright, white, horror-stricken, like a marble statue.

"Oh, heaven!" groaned Captain Archer.

"You've done for yourself now, Chandos."

The captain ran to pick up the governor, who struggled to his feet, speechless with his excess of rage and fury.

A little group had gathered—stern-faced officers, who looked upon the strange scene in unbounded amazement and horror.

"You have seen?" breathed the governor, huskily. "You have all seen?"

The officers expressed assent, looking wonderingly at poor Chandos, who, overcome by the consequences of his wild passion, stood rooted to the spot.

"He has committed an assault upon his majesty, in assaulting me!" declared the

governor, wiping the blood from his face upon his white cambric handkerchief. "I am the representative of the king, and the offence of which this wretch is guilty seems to me to be punishable with death."

All were silent. A cold thrill traversed every nerve of Chandos's body, to be succeeded by a mad joy.

Death! Why, that was what he most longed for. Death! He could meet it as a bridegroom meets his bride, with smiles and welcome.

Lord Strathmere read the expression of his countenance and exclaimed:

"Before death shall come what he will dread worse. Take him down to the barrack-yard."

"What for?" asked Captain Archer.

"Ask no questions. Obey my orders."

Two soldiers were summoned, and Ralph Chandos was taken down to the barrack-yard, the officers all following, with some suspicion of what was to come.

"Where is Colonel Gurney?" demanded the governor.

"He has gone out," answered Captain Archer. "I don't know where."

"Then you can take charge of the case," said Lord Strathmere, grimly. "I think that no one present will dare contest my authority. You all saw this convict's outrageous assault upon my life. I escaped his murderous hands by a miracle. He must be properly punished to strike awe to the hearts of his fellow-convicts. The proper trial will come later, when he will be sentenced to death or to Norfolk Island. Now, men, string him up to the triangle!"

The triangle was the frame to which convicts were strapped for flogging.

"My lord!" said Captain Archer, in consternation; "you would not have him flogged?"

"But I would. String him up, men!"

"But, my lord!" cried Captain Archer, agitatedly, "you goaded the convict to the assault. For heaven's sake, let him be tried—"

"Another word and you will be court-martialed, Captain Archer," said Lord Strathmere. "You are here to obey orders—I to give them."

The soldiers seized upon our hero, stripped his clothing from his shoulders, in spite of his desperate resistance, and bound him to the triangle.

"Now give him a hundred lashes, well laid on!" commanded the baron, exultantly. "Lay on with a will, you scoundrels, or you shall have double the number for yourselves!"

The cat-o'-nine-tails, a murderous-looking goad, with nine separate, stinging lashes, was produced. No one ventured to contest the governor's authority. The officers looked on in silence.

"Lay on!" repeated Lord Strathmere. "What are you waiting for? Now—one—"

A light, girlish figure came flying into the barrack-yard—a girl with frightened eyes of dusk, and countenance white as any snow-drift.

It was Gerda Pelham.

She had gone to the hospital to inquire after her lover, attended by Susan Priggs, who was again installed as her maid. She had been informed of what had occurred, and of the probable doom of Chandos, and she had flown to him as on the wings of the wind. She was a picture of horror, terror, and anguish.

Behind her came Susan Priggs, who shared somewhat the excitement of her young mistress, although by no means sympathising with its object.

In one wide, sweeping glance, Gerda Pelham took in the features of the scene—the gloating, sinister visage of the governor; the silent officers; the executioner, as he might well be called, with his formidable weapon of punishment; and, finally, the figure of the victim, bound and helpless, his white shoulders bared to the lash that had not yet fallen, his head bowed in an unutterable humiliation and shame!

With a bound, Gerda reached his side. Her shawl was on her arm.

With a swift movement she flung it over Chandos's shoulders, and turned and faced his

persecutors with dilating nostrils and heaving breast.

"This is no place for you, Miss Pelham," exclaimed Capt. Archer, in distress. "Let me take you home."

"No one shall take me from Ralph Chandos's side while he stands here bound like this!" cried Gerda, her voice ringing. "What does all this mean? Who is doing this monstrous iniquity? Not you, Lord Strathmere?"

"Yes, I," declared the governor, savagely. "Do you see my swollen and disfigured face? It is his work. This is no place for you, Miss Pelham. You must go—"

"Go, Gerda!" breathed Chandos, in a low, thrilling tone, freighted with pain. "Go, and leave me to my fate. I shall not survive it, thank Heaven!"

But Gerda stood at his side, in the very way of the executioners.

They would have been compelled to strike her, had they raised the lash.

"I will not go!" she repeated. "Lord Strathmere, in Heaven's name, I appeal to you. Ralph is your own cousin. Save him! Save him!"

The governor only smiled exultantly. The girl sprang forward and knelt at his feet.

Her upturned face was full of agonised appeal.

"Have mercy!" she pleaded. "As you hope for mercy at the last great day, have mercy now!"

The governor was silent. "If you strike him, you will kill me!" moaned Gerda, wringing her hands. "Can I say nothing to move your heart, Lord Strathmere? Oh, save him! save him!"

Lord Strathmere's face glowed luridly. His hour!

"I cannot save him," he whispered, bending over, "but you can. Give me your promise to marry me to-morrow, Gerda Pelham, and he shall not be punished. Refuse me, and the lash shall fall upon his back. Quick! Your answer! His fate is in your hands!"

(To be Continued.)

## CONVICTED.

### CHAPTER LX.

It had happened that Pierre and Jean Renaud had lingered about the terraces and ruins for several hours, in the hope of capturing their expected prey, and also in close communion over their plans for delivering the fugitive into the hands of the law.

When matters had been arranged to their satisfaction it was close upon the stroke of one, and Jean Renaud proposed his return to the village inn which he patronised, upon the ground that their expected victim would not appear that night.

The valet assented, and accompanied his brother to the entrance of the Mount Heron grounds, which, by the winding avenue, was more than a mile distant.

They had lingered near the gate-lodge a few minutes in final conversation, and Pierre Renaud had then slowly returned to the castle by a shorter route.

As he ascended to the terrace it occurred to him to make a final tour of investigation, less with the expectation of coming upon the fugitive than to satisfy his extreme sense of caution, and his desire to leave no possible loophole of escape unguarded.

He entered the courtyard at the moment of the parting of father and daughter at the scullery window.

He was still prowling about, but upon the point of re-entering the castle, when Mr. Strange returned.

Sharp-eyed as a lynx, he espied the fugitive as he neared the ruins, and he drew his breath hard, and clenched his hands, while he crept

forward with the stealthiness of a beast of prey.

The one desire of Pierre Renaud's soul at that instant was to capture Mr. Strange, and take him prisoner, with a view to delivering him up on the morrow to the officers of the law, and receiving for his service the large reward that had been offered years since, and which was still standing, for the capture of the fugitive.

He never had a thought to the possible consequences to himself.

That any danger could result to himself from his manœuvring never occurred to him.

Had not Lord Stratford Heron been tried, and found guilty of the murder of his brother?

Was he not under sentence of death? There would be no second trial; he would be hanged within a fortnight.

As to the interference Lord Stratford Heron's arrest and execution would have in the love-affair of his master and Lady Vivian Clyffe, Mr. Pierre Renaud had quite risen above such small considerations.

His selfishness and sense of perfect security impelled him to deeds of boldness from which in other moments he would have shrunk. He felt himself in every sense master of the situation.

Mr. Strange kept a keen look out as he advanced towards the ruins, but he did not see the crouching figure moving towards him with creeping step and gleaming eyes; he did not hear the stealthy footfalls of his enemy.

But, as he neared the open doorway of the ruins, Pierre Renaud bounded forward and hurled himself upon him like an engine of destruction.

Mr. Strange did not prove an easy prey. A swift recoil, one instant of absolute silence, then he fought his assailant with the desperation of a wounded lion.

The fierce hatred of the one was matched by the desperate fury of the other. There was no outcry, no utterance of a single word.

The Frenchman was thin, wiry, and muscular. The fugitive was tall, large, grandly developed, with a massive chest, and with the strength, at this supreme moment, of a Hercules. One fought for hatred and greed, the other for his life.

The conflict was sharp, keen, terrible. Breathing hard, they reeled back and forth, parrying and dealing blows, until, with unexpected force and swiftness, Mr. Strange dealt his antagonist a stunning blow upon the head that sent him staggering back several paces, faint and gasping for breath.

Mr. Strange seized the opportunity, and dashed into the ruins. His enemy, recovering, sprang after him.

The former made directly for the ancient chapel and ran down the dusky aisle. Before he had reached the pulpit his enemy had entered the door.

Renaud beheld the flying fugitive enter the deeper shadow of the pulpit, and then he vanished altogether from his view.

He followed to the pulpit, and struck a match. Its glimmer revealed nothing of his intended victim.

He stared blankly at the lofty desk and gave utterance to a string of blasphemies that might have appalled a denizen of Hades.

He made a thorough examination of the entire chapel, including the passage below leading to the crypt, but his labour was in vain.

"He has escaped into the Cavalier's Retreat," he muttered. "He is safe for to-night, but I'll unearth him from his burrow to-morrow! I'll establish a cordon of police around the chapel, so that he cannot escape. I'll have this old pulpit pulled down. I have destroyed the daughter; the father's death on the gallows will follow swiftly. Ah, my Lord Stratford Heron, alias Mr. Strange, I'll pay off old and new scores and win a big reward at one swoop. You cannot escape me. You are waiting here for your doom like a rat in a trap."

The next morning Alex awoke from a troubled and fitful sleep at a late hour.

She arose, took her usual bath, and dressed herself, but she did not descend to the breakfast-room.

Her adventure of the previous night had left her weak and apprehensive, and more than ever inclined to be cautious.

She desired not to meet Pierre Renaud until she should have recovered her usual strength, and accordingly determined to remain in her own room throughout the morning.

She rang her bell.

A servant obeyed her call, and she sent a message to the housekeeper, begging Mrs. Matthews to come to her.

The housekeeper promptly obeyed the summons.

Alex's pallor and disturbed expression excited her alarm.

"Are you ill, Miss Strange?" she demanded, anxiously.

"Not ill, Mrs. Matthews," replied the young lady, "but I am not quite well. Where is Pierre Renaud?"

"He is gone down to the village," was the wondering response. "He went nearly half an hour since."

"He attempted my life again last night!" declared Alex. "He believes me dead at this moment. He has gone out to avoid being present at the expected discovery of my supposed fate."

Mrs. Matthews was horrified.

"I went out for a little walk alone upon the terrace last evening," continued Alex, "and, as I stood upon the edge of the bluff, he came up behind me and pushed me over. If I had not, providentially, fallen upon a little ledge where were two or three dwarf shrubs, I should have been dashed to pieces upon the rocks at the base of the bluff."

"Lord have mercy!" breathed the amazed housekeeper, sinking into the nearest chair. "How did you ever get back to your room, Miss Strange?"

"As soon as I was able, I came back without difficulty," answered Alex, guardedly. "But I am weak and bruised, as you may suppose. I should like to have my breakfast in my room, Mrs. Matthews, and I must beg you to allow a housemaid to sleep in my room during the remainder of my stay at Mount Heron."

"I'll open the door of the adjoining chamber," said Mrs. Matthews, "and I'll sleep there myself. I'll send up your breakfast at once, Miss Strange. But what can be Renaud's motive in thus attempting to destroy you?"

"He is the murderer of Lord Mountheron," declared Alex. "He knows that I have interested myself in that tragedy, and fears that I may bring home the crime to him. He does not know of our discovery of the watch-guard, but he suspects that I am working secretly and actively against him, and he desires to remove me for ever from his path."

"I see!" said Mrs. Matthews; nevertheless, her tone and manner showed that she was greatly perplexed, and that her mental vision was by no means so clear as she pretended. "I will go down now to attend to my duties, but will keep an eye upon Pierre Renaud when he returns. One thing is sure—he won't get another chance to work you harm, Miss Strange, so long as you remain at the castle!"

"She withdrew, soon after sending up Alex's breakfast."

When the tray had been removed, Alex sat down at her desk and wrote an urgent letter to Lady Vivian Clyffe, begging her to return to Clyffe-bourne immediately, and stating that she would explain upon her arrival.

This letter she gave into the hands of the housemaid, with orders to take it to the housekeeper. Mrs. Matthews despatched it by a private messenger to the Mount Heron post-office, instead of putting it in the post-bag, fearing lest Pierre Renaud might, on discovering that Alex had escaped the death he had prepared for her, suspect that she had written an account of his intended crime, and intercept the letter.

Renaud had gone down to the village, as Alex had surmised, that the expected discovery of her fate might take place during his absence. He



called upon his brother at the inn patronised by the latter, and the two walked out upon the pier to its head, where they talked together for an hour or more, Renaud relating his adventure with Lord Stratford Heron after their parting upon the previous night.

Fortified in his resolves by the sympathy and advice of his brother, Pierre Renaud walked from the pier-head up the High Street to the railway station and telegraphed to Scotland Yard that the fugitive Lord Stratford Heron was lurking about his ancestral castle, and that a small force of officers should be sent at once for his capture.

"That step is taken," the valet muttered, strolling out again into the street. "It can't be recalled. The marquis will be mad when he hears of it, but he won't dare vent his anger on me. I rather think I am master of the situation. I am going to retire from service. This reward of the Government for the capture of Lord Stratford Heron will be a fine addition to my fine income. I'll marry Felicie Dupont, go to France, buy a chateau, and set up as a gentleman. And as to Lord Stratford—why, the evidence that procured his condemnation once would procure it again, if he could obtain a second trial—a thing that is utterly impossible. He'll be strung up on the gallows within a fortnight, as sure as I live. The marquis must hurry up his courtship, or else wait until the scandal blows over. My opinion is, that Lady Vivian, with her pride, will marry my lord to escape the scandal of her first husband's execution."

He parted from his brother and walked on to the rectory, with the determination to call upon the Rev. Justice Dalton.

He was in a bold mood, and a drink he had taken with his brother at an ale-house had abated somewhat of his usual excessive caution.

The rector was in; Renaud sent up his name; and the neat housemaid returned with orders to show the visitor up to Mr. Dalton's study.

The valet entered the rector's presence, his dark, inscrutable visage wearing an odd smile; his black eyes glittering, his manner cool and self-possessed.

The reverend gentleman, who had deferred his intended visit to London with a view to seeing Alex again before going, seemed to be not quite so much at his ease.

There was a little flush on his benignant face, a little shrinking in his manner, which Renaud was too absorbed in himself to notice.

"You wished to see me?" said Mr. Dalton, coldly. "Have you some message from your master?"

"From Lord Mountheron?" said the valet, correctly, arching his brows. "No, my errand is my own. The marquis is in London. I came down to Mount Heron upon his lordship's business, and during my brief stay here have made a great discovery, about which I have called to see you."

"Indeed!" said the rector, considerably puzzled, his thoughts fixing themselves upon Alex.

"I have called upon you in your capacity as magistrate," said Pierre Renaud, somewhat importantly.

"And what can I do for you?"

"I remember," said Renaud, "that you, like everyone else, were overwhelmed with the evidences of Lord Stratford Heron's guilt in connection with the death of his brother. You were his lordship's tutor, but your affection for him did not blind your eyes to his wickedness. I feel, therefore, that you will do your duty in the matter I shall place before you."

"I hope always to do my duty," said the rector, icily.

"I supposed so. And I call upon you, as a magistrate, to send officers to Mount Heron Castle to search for and arrest Lord Stratford Heron, the fugitive murderer of his brother."

The rector started back, white and amazed.

"What do you mean?" he gasped. "Lord Stratford Heron is dead! He died years ago in South America!"

"That was a canard—a rumour—a mistake. Lord Stratford Heron is alive; he is prowling

about the castle, and has his hiding-place in the Cavalier's Retreat, somewhere about the ancient chapel."

"Alive? Lord Stratford Heron alive? I cannot believe it!" cried the rector.

"I had an encounter in the grounds with him last night, and nearly succeeded in capturing him. I recognised him perfectly, and have just telegraphed to Scotland Yard to have a force sent to arrest him."

"In the meantime I call upon you, sir, as a magistrate, to do your duty," said Renaud, with an air of authority. "This man, the greatest criminal of his day, is lurking about Mount Heron. He may at any moment seek to escape from England."

"I demand that you send a sufficient force to watch every avenue of possible escape. The ancient chapel must be watched night and day until the arrival of the force from Scotland Yard."

"You are sure that Lord Stratford Heron is alive—is in England—and near the castle?"

"I'll stake my life on it!" Mr. Dalton appeared overwhelmed. The joy afforded by the information that his former pupil was alive was balanced by his terror at his presence at the very seat of danger.

"Unhappy boy!" he thought, the image of his pupil in his gay and happy youth recurring to him. "What madness could have brought him back to England?"

Renaud studied the rector's pale countenance, upon which a cold sweat had started, and smiled sardonically.

"Am I to understand that you will send officers to seek for and arrest this runaway criminal?" asked the valet, after a brief pause.

"Before proceeding further, you would do well to consult Lord Mountheron," said the rector. "What will he think of this frightful scandal? Consult with him, Renaud—"

"And allow Lord Stratford to escape?" ejaculated Pierre Renaud, in a burst of seemingly virtuous indignation. "No, sir! if you choose to prove false to your oath of office, the consequence be upon your own head. I shall procure his arrest, and receive the government reward offered therefor. If you decline to conduct the affair, so be it. I will find another magistrate. And tomorrow the men from London will be here. Every chance of escape shall be guarded against. I will take care of that!"

He moved toward the door.

"Stay!" said the rector, hoarsely. "I will do my duty; I will send the officers at once to the castle with explicit instructions."

"Very good, sir. And bid them keep their own counsel. Not a word must be spoken of their purpose, until that purpose is accomplished!"

The rector assented, and Renaud, in fine spirits, took his leave.

Mr. Dalton sat with bowed head for many minutes after his visitor's departure. He was scarcely able still to comprehend that his former pupil was alive and so near to him. With his new convictions of Lord Stratford's innocence of the crime of which he had been found guilty, he believed himself justified in assisting the unfortunate man's escape from the country; but how could he warn him?

"The men must go to the castle," he thought, "but I will go with them. I will find some opportunity, perhaps. I wonder—I am all upset and bewildered. I can only see one thing clearly: I must give orders for Lord Stratford's capture."

With a heavy heart, he set about his task.

Meanwhile, Pierre Renaud returned to the castle.

By this time, he thought, Alex's body must have been found and a coroner summoned. As he ascended to the upper terrace, he encountered Jacob Gregg, the miller, who had come away from the servants' entrance with a very dissatisfied expression upon his florid face. The miller brightened at sight of the valet, and accosted him familiarly.

"I heard as you were seen in the village, Mr. Renaud," he exclaimed, "and I thought belike my lord was back, too, though the flag wasn't up. Where the man is one expects to see the master,

eh? How long will his lordship stay in town?"

"As long as my Lady Vivian Clyffe stays," replied the valet, with a laugh.

"I'm wanting to see him mighty bad," said the miller, scratching his head. "About the most important business, too, Mr. Renaud. If you'll give me his address, I'll drop him a line."

"Your business must wait. My lord may return to-morrow. What's up, Gregg? You surely don't want more than you've got. You're in a fair way to be a rich man."

"I know it, but I've only a life-lease," said the miller, gloomily, "and I want a ninety-nine years lease, for the sake of the little chap at home."

The valet whistled.

"You won't get it, I'm thinking," he exclaimed. "My lord won't be imposed upon, Gregg. Why, the mill property is worth three or four hundred pounds a year, may be more. My lord won't give you a longer lease, just make yourself sure of that."

"Then I'll blow on him!" said the miller, sullenly, a red spark in his dull eyes. "Lady Vivian Clyffe'd pay me handsome to hear what I know."

"Oh! no, she wouldn't. She's going to marry my lord."

"There was a young lady at my cottage the other day," said the miller, angrily, "that scented something wrong, and warned me to tell the truth. I might make more by telling her. She's Miss Strange, as saved my boy's life."

The valet started, then grinned.

"Tell Miss Strange, then?" he exclaimed.

"I'll see my lord first," was the dogged response. "You jest write to him what I want, and you say that if I don't get it I'll blow, that's all! I'll blow, if I have to go to Portsmouth for it. Jest you say that, Mr. Renaud, and let my lord see as I'm in dead earnest. You're a wearing di'monds; I mean to have that there ninety-nine year lease, or see what I can make out of the other side!"

The miller, with a defiant look, passed on, descending the terrace. The valet pursued his walk to the castle.

"So 'Miss Strange' has been stirring up the miller?" he mused. "That young lady must have been helped by Satan himself. I got rid of her just in time."

There was no signs of commotion about the castle.

He concluded that Alex's fate had not been discovered.

He walked slowly to the edge of the bluff and peered over.

The yacht lay at anchor below, behind the breakwater; there was no sign of confusion on her deck, no token of Alex's presence on the rocks or in the surf below.

Not daring to pause to investigate, he entered the dwelling at the great porch, with the air of authority that distinguished him.

The hall porter sat in his high-backed, carved chair.

Renaud stopped to speak to him in an easy, unconcerned fashion, but the man had no news to communicate.

Somewhat disappointed, Renaud ascended the grand staircase, disdaining as he always did the humbler means of ascent provided for the servants.

"Her death has not been discovered yet," he thought. "It's past noon, too. It's very odd!"

As he passed Alex's door, an impulse came upon him to see if it was locked.

He tried the knob.

It yielded to his touch.

He peeped into the spacious chamber, at the great oriel window, the glowing sea-coal fire, and noted the appearance of brightness, warmth and luxury that pervaded it. The room was empty, as he expected.

"The housemaid has been in and made up the room," he said to himself. "Why did she not miss the girl? Why has not the alarm been given?"

At that moment the sound of singing penetrated

to his ears from Mrs. Ingestre's room. The clear, pure, bird-like voice he had heard before; it was that of Alex.

He stood for a moment transfixed, unable to credit the evidence of his hearing.

Alex had gone in to visit her hostesses, whom she found complaining as usual, and desiring to be amused.

She had begged the girl to sing to her, and Alex, setting aside her own fatigues and anxieties, with the unselfishness so characteristic of her, had complied with her request.

Renaud listened in a sort of stupor.

"There's some mistake," he muttered, when she had finished. "Madame has a visitor—that voice is not Miss Strange's. She's dead—dead as a herring!"

He passed again into the hall, closing the door.

His hand was still on the knob, he was still waiting expectantly to hear further singing, when the door of Lord Mountheron's private room opened, and John Wilson came out, with an empty coal-scuttle and a hearth-brush in hand.

Renaud stared at him, with a look of annoyance.

"Are you looking for Miss Strange, sir?" asked the new servant, innocently. "If so you'll find her in Mrs. Ingestre's room. I saw her go in there about an hour ago."

Renaud glared at Wilson with the fury of a demon.

Breathing an oath that but feebly expressed his awful rage, the valet went into his own room.

Wilson, with a peculiar smile, glided back into Lord Mountheron's private apartment, and resumed his investigations, in which he had been disturbed.

## CHAPTER LXI.

THE Rev. Justice Dalton took ample time for consideration upon the startling communication of Lord Mountheron's valet.

It was not until dusk of the November evening many hours after Renaud's visit, that the reverend magistrate despatched two officers of the law, ordinary constables, to Mount Heron Castle, with instructions to search the ruins thoroughly in quest of the long-missing Lord Stratford Heron.

He bade them be secret about their errand, not to gossip with the servants, mentioned the source of his information in regard to the fugitive, rehearsed the evidence of Lord Stratford's death in South America, and managed to throw so much doubt upon Renaud's statements that the two constables departed upon their errand in no mood to be vigilant, and with no expectation of effecting a capture.

They found both Pierre and Jean Renaud awaiting them impatiently.

The former rebuked them sharply for their tardiness.

They replied angrily, and an antagonism was established between the two parties that did not promise results satisfactory to the valet.

A thorough search was made of the ruins and of the ancient chapel, but it was fruitless. The constables lingered awhile, and then, in defiance of Pierre Renaud's commands, and his angry fuming, they departed.

"Blight them!" cried the valet. "They shall be paid off for this! The London men'll be here in the morning, and we'll tear down the chapel but we'll find our game. As for to-night, lest he should escape, Jean, you and I must watch here in the chapel all night. If we capture him, we shall have all the glory, as well as the reward!"

Jean assented, and the pair established themselves in the ancient chapel for the night. They talked for hours in the darkness, in low tones. Some time past midnight Pierre Renaud heard a rustling in the vicinity of the pulpit, but an incautious movement of his brother defeated his hopes of a capture, and produced a volley of oaths that so angered Jean that a fight between them nearly ensued.

Mr. Strange had been upon the point of coming forth for exercise, but being thus warned of hostile proximity he returned to his retreat, and did not thence emerge again that night. His larder was getting low, and it was not without the most serious apprehensions that he recognised the fact that his presence at the castle had been discovered, and that he was in a state of siege.

How he was to replenish his stock of provisions, or to effect his escape, or to seek needed exercise even, was a problem too deep and terrible for solution.

The siege was raised in the morning, when Jean Renaud set out on his return to the village, and Pierre Renaud went in to make necessary changes in his toilet and to eat his breakfast.

Soon after he had partaken of this meal, over which he lingered with the taste of an epicure, he was informed that two men from London had called to see him.

These were the police officers for whom he had sent, and they had been waiting for him half an hour, not wishing to disturb him at his meal.

He hastened to them, and as he entered their presence, John Wilson, hearth-brush in hand, slunk away.

Mr. John Wilson had entertained them during their period of waiting, and to such good purpose that they regarded Mr. Pierre Renaud with the liveliest interest when he made his appearance.

The valet, with an air of importance, stated his case.

Lord Stratford Heron, the escaped murderer of his brother, the late Marquis of Mountheron, was alive, had returned to England, to the scene of his crime, and was now in hiding in some secret nook somewhere about the ruined chapel.

Renaud stated that the Government reward offered for Lord Stratford's capture must come to him, but that, of course, he should reward the police officers liberally.

He gave them breakfast, and conducted them to the ruins and to the ancient chapel.

The pulpit was examined, but no sign of an entrance to a secret hiding-place could be discovered.

Renaud demanded that the pulpit should be torn down.

The strangers temporised, believing it better to watch at night, when the fugitive must come forth for food, fresh air, and exercise.

The matter was so arranged.

Renaud passed off the strangers as his own visitors to the servants of the castle, but the grave and anxious countenances of the housekeeper and the butler showed that some inkling of the truth had reached their understandings.

Alex took good care never to be alone.

She spent her days with Mrs. Ingestre; at night Mrs. Matthews slept in the adjoining chamber.

At the first suspicion of what was going on, the worthy housekeeper hastened to Alex, whom she found in her own room.

"There are strange doings at the castle, Miss Strange," she said, after dismissing the housemaid, who was at her morning-work. "Two strangers have come from London, and Puffet says they are police-officers."

Alex started.

"Why are they here?" she asked.

"Puffet overheard them talking together, and caught a sentence or two. He says that Lord Stratford Heron is alive, and that he's about the castle somewhere, and they are come to capture him."

Alex grew white as death.

"It's odd that Lord Stratford should return just as some fate has sent you to find evidence of his innocence, Miss Strange," said Mrs. Matthews. "I hope he won't be captured, for all this new evidence may amount to nothing in court, and he may be hanged without even a new trial."

"Where are these policemen now?" asked Alex, in a voice so unlike her own as to startle her companion.

"I have given you a great shock, have I not,

Miss Alex?" asked the housekeeper. "I should have been more careful. I forgot that such violence as arrests, and that sort of thing, would shock a delicate young lady like you, after all the interest you've taken in the case, too. The men have gone to examine the chapel. After that they'll amuse themselves until night. They think that Lord Stratford will keep hidden until after dark."

Alex's one thought now was to warn her father of his peril.

As soon as Mrs. Matthews had gone below to her duties the young girl seated herself at her desk and wrote down all that she had just heard, and, in the same note, implored her father to leave England immediately, and to seek safety in some far-off solitude.

This note she put in her pocket, and then attended herself for a walk.

Descending the stairs, she went out upon the terrace as if merely for exercise, and presently turned her steps in the direction of the ruins.

Nothing was to be seen of Pierre Renaud, or of his new allies.

Alex entered the chapel. Solitude and gloom reigned here supreme.

She glided to the high pulpit and ascended the steps, seeking a crevice in the carving in which to conceal her letter.

At the same moment a faint sound, coming from the wall behind her, startled her. She peered over the high carvings, and beheld the block of stone in the wall slightly ajar and a white face looking out upon her.

With the swiftness almost of light, she descended to the floor below, and thrust into the aperture the letter she had written.

It was seized by her father's hand. Her father's voice, in a subtle whisper, penetrated to her sharpened sense of hearing.

"Do not fear," he said. "Go to Clyffebourne. I will meet you there to-morrow night if I can get away. I shall then leave England."

The block of stone swung noiselessly into its place. Only a blank, grim stone wall met the girl's gaze.

With her load of anxiety lessened, she turned and glided away. She had nearly reached the door, when it opened and Pierre Renaud and his visitors again entered the chapel.

They had been investigating the dungeons and vaults under the ruins, and had returned for a further examination of the chapel.

The valet uttered an exclamation at sight of Alex, and a black scowl added to the disfigurement of his face.

The girl's agitation and pallor attracted the attention of the policemen. They stopped to question her as to the cause of her visit to the chapel.

Renaud would have denounced her as knowing the secret of Lord Stratford Heron's hiding-place, but in doing that he must proclaim her relationship to the fugitive, and the fact that after her father she was the rightful owner of the title and estates of Mountheron. He bit his lips and was silent.

"There is no need to account for my presence here," said Alex, upraising her proud little head haughtily, in response to the officers' interrogatories. "I am a guest at the castle, and the ruins and chapel are always open to visitors."

She passed on, no one offering to detain her. "She's been here to warn her father," thought the valet. "I wonder if she saw him. At any rate, if he keeps hidden to-night we'll soon starve him out. Once he is captured I'll see to my young lady again. I'll make sure next time."

The London inspectors lounged about the castle grounds, and ruins all day, with the exception of a couple of hours which they employed in a visit to the Rev. Justice Dalton at his rectory.

The rector laid before them all the new facts bearing upon the tragedy which Alex had discovered, and these facts were discussed in all their bearings and possibilities.

One of the London officers and a Mount Heron constable watched all night in the chapel, the



brothers Renaud seeking repose, but nothing was seen of the fugitive.

Soon after daybreak they were off duty for the day.

No one dreamed that Lord Stratford Heron would dare show himself by daylight, yet after breakfast one of the officers returned to lounge amid the ruins, with Jean Renaud for company.

The interval of an hour during which the chapel had been left unguarded had been improved by the fugitive.

The lack of out-door air and exercise was telling upon his strength.

He could not remain to be starved to death, nor till the chapel walls should be pulled down.

He kept vigilant watch, and knew the precise moment when his enemies retired from the scene.

Seizing the opportunity, he crept from his concealment, stole across the chapel floor, and emerged into the ruins.

The day was lowering, the morning not advanced, yet he dared not descend the rocks to the sea, nor make his way down the terraces to the wooded park, lest he should be seen.

His hiding-place was known to be somewhere about the chapel.

His enemies would concentrate their attention in that quarter.

He believed that he could conceal himself among the ruins until night should come again, and he could then get away under cover of darkness.

"I could have stood a siege of months, if I had been well provisioned," he thought. "As it is, I must be out of the country while they think they have me here in a trap."

He glided down into the dungeons under the ruins, and prepared to spend his day there constantly on the alert against surprise.

But the inspectors did not go there over the same ground again that day which they had so well examined in the morning. No one came near him.

Now and then a gaunt rat startled his solitude, but no sound came from the upper world.

The day dragged away drearily, each hour and minute seem ag an age to the prisoner.

The day passed as heavily to Alex. About noon, however, a little event occurred that lightened her gloom.

A telegraphic despatch arrived for her from the village, and Mrs. Matthews brought it up.

It was from Lady Vivian Clyffe, who was on her way to Clyffebourne, and would arrive before evening.

It bade Alex proceed to Clyffebourne and await her there.

The girl hastened to communicate the contents of her telegram to Mrs. Ingestre.

That lady was sorry to lose her, and offered her every possible inducement to stay, but in the end yielded gracefully to Alex's determination.

"If you ever want a friend, my dear," she said, "or a home, I will give you both. I don't know why I have grown so attached to you, but no one could live with you, I think, without loving you."

"If I ever have an opportunity to repay your kindness, dear Mrs. Ingestre," said Alex, "I will gladly improve it. In inviting me to Mount Heron you have done me a greater kindness than you know."

The carriage was ordered, and Alex took her leave of Mrs. Matthews, bestowed gifts of money upon the housemaids and footmen, and entered the vehicle, and was borne away on her journey to Clyffebourne.

Pierre Renaud witnessed her departure, and looked after her darkly.

He had tried again and again to destroy her, but she had escaped him, and was passing out of his reach to harm her.

It almost seemed to him as if some higher power had intervened again and again to protect her.

But he set his teeth together, and swore in his heart that he would make all sure yet.

"I shall never be safe, even in France, while she lives," he said to himself. "She suspects me of having murdered my late master. She is shrewd and cunning. I, who never feared any man, am afraid of her. There is something in the fearless look of her innocent eyes that goes to my heart and searches out my very thoughts. I fear her—I will kill her. I will attend to her father to-day. To-morrow I will attend to her. And not a minute too soon. She has stirred up the miller, and so I've written my lord. She is more dangerous, with her youth and beauty and love for her father, than a sleuth-hound."

The London inspectors were getting impatient.

By this time the lowest scullion in the castle knew that their errand was to arrest some person who was in hiding in some secret place about the chapel.

Who the "unfortunate person" was, was also suspected.

The servants gathered in groups and whispered together. Every one was uneasy and expectant.

In the course of the afternoon, Pierre Renaud received a telegram that his master was on his way home.

The fires had not been suffered to die out of the marquis's rooms, least the damp and chill of the season should penetrate the massive walls.

The rooms were put in exquisite order, the French chef de cuisine notified, and a carriage was sent to the station to meet the lord of the castle.

The grand old castle was brilliantly lighted when the horses toiled up the steep and winding ascent and the carriage was rolled into the porte cochère, and Lord Mountheron sprang lightly out and entered the great hall.

The marquis was in excellent spirits. He had journeyed up from town with Lady Vivian Clyffe, and she had been very gracious to him.

His hopes of winning her had received new impulse.

His soft and gentle face was beaming with smiles and contentment.

The hour of his success was close at hand, he said to himself.

He passed up to his apartments to make his dinner-toilet.

Renaud was in his dressing-room waiting for him.

The valet's face was somewhat grave, but he had no anxiety in regard to the manner in which his master would meet the communication he had to make. Renaud was the bolder spirit of the two. Success had made him almost reckless.

He despised his gentle master as a coward, a mild and soft-mannered Sybarite, wedded to ease and luxury, as he was himself, but fearful of danger, unlike himself, and shrinking from it as from a deadly wild beast.

(To be Continued.)

## AUSTRALIA.

A RECENTLY published document gives the following interesting statement as to the rapid development of Australia, and shows what that colony is becoming to the mother country:—Ninety years have elapsed since the Australian colony was occupied by England. On the 28th of February, 1788, Captain Phillips landed there, in the capacity of Governor, and took possession of that continent, then wild and wholly uncultivated. He had with him a certain number of convicts, and at once set about the installation of a penal settlement. The world was very far then from foreseeing that this territory, which is nearly equal to Europe in superficies, would, in less than a century, contain a population of two millions and a-half of whites, and that its annual commerce would amount to £25,000,000—a sum nearly equal to that of Great Britain at the commencement of the last century.

The colonists, taken as a whole, possess a

revenue of £16,000,000, and the fields which, at the time of occupation, were only peopled by kangaroos, now feed seven million head of cattle and sixty-three millions of sheep. The first great impulse given to the prosperity of the colony was the discovery of gold, but during the last quarter of a century many other and more lasting sources of wealth have been discovered in its agricultural and mining productions.

## IN HONOUR BOUND.

It was only a girl's voice, singing in the twilight, that Robert Crandall heard, as he went up the steps of his uncle's house—only a girl's voice, coming softly through the open windows, and filling the June night with a certain tender sweetness; but it moved this one listener strangely. He stood upon the steps, and waited until the music was over.

He knew afterwards that it was a song called "A Burden," written by a poet named Marston, who early had dipped his pen in the fountain of tears; but when he heard it first it was quite new to him. He heard only the last three verses, but they touched some chord of feeling in his own heart.

The singer had a sweet, low voice; not strong, but full of pathos, and a certain kind of passion.

He experienced a strange tumult of emotion as he listened. The singer could be nothing to him. A child might as well cry for the moon as he long for the love of Clara Spendwell, the only child of that merchant prince, George Spendwell, his uncle and employer; and, even were this otherwise, and she were not so far above him, he himself was in honour bound.

Before he left his native village he had asked a girl there to love him and wait for him, till he could come back to claim her. He had thought then, that his calm, tranquil liking for this nice, sweet young girl, whom he had known all his life, was love; and so, calling his feeling by that name which he understood so little, he had asked her to share his future.

He had acted in perfectly good faith; as most men do who make precisely the same mistake. It is very probable that if he had never seen his Cousin Clara he would never have discovered his error; and would have made his country sweetheart the most tranquil and contented of husbands.

Perhaps it was an evil day when he went from the country to London; though all his family gloried greatly in his prospects; and he, himself, was not without his own share of exultation.

His Uncle Spendwell had seemed to have quite forgotten his sister and her family for years; except that at Christmas time he always sent them handsome gifts.

Great, therefore, was the surprise in the farmhouse when a letter came, inviting his nephew Robert to come to London; and saying that he would offer him a good position in his business, if after a personal interview he found the young man's acquirements up to the mark.

Father Crandall was quietly pleased—Mother Crandall was exultant—Robert himself was silently triumphant—very silently, for it was not his nature to manifest his emotions.

He felt confident of success, for he was a thorough bookkeeper and mathematician, but he did not vaunt himself.

"I think I shall get on," he had remarked to his mother.

Only to Lucy Morrison, who had been his childish sweetheart and his life-long friend, did he speak more freely.

To her he had said, with a little dash of self-confidence, which did not displease her:

"Lucy, I am bound to win. Will you wait for me till I have done so, and then share the winnings?"

Lucy's dear, dark eyes had filled with tears, and her soft cheeks had flushed as he looked at her.



[FOUND AGAIN.]

"Do you love me, Robert? Are you sure?" she asked, timidly.

"I should think so. Whom else should I love? Have I not loved you all my life?"

And then he kissed her; and they had both believed themselves very happy.

Yet that night, when Lucy went to bed, she thought, in her heart, how much less romantic love was in real life than in novels and poems; and Robert had said to himself that it was a very sweet and natural and pleasant thing when love grew up with a fellow, as it had with him—there were none of those doubts and fears and general miseries that some men talked about; and there never could be any jealousy or misunderstanding.

Robert left in good spirits. Lucy was very pale, and her lips trembled when she bade him good-bye. His mother cried over him profusely; even his father's eyes were moistened as he shook hands with his only son. Robert was perfectly calm.

He tried hard to pride himself on his composure, and call it manly self-control; but in his heart of hearts he was a little disgusted with himself, because he knew that he was glad, not sorry, to go. And yet this was not unnatural. The great, untried, fascinating world was before him, and it was not strange that he longed to go into it and begin to live.

If he had been desperately in love with Lucy it might have been different; but the time had not yet come for him to make the discovery. It was the last week in August when he went away.

"I shall get away from the country winter," he had said to himself, as he rode along in the little old stage, which took passengers from Sayfield to the railway station, three miles away. "I shall get away from the country winter, and I always did hate it."

He had a curiously complex temperament, this young man. He was very practical. He had plenty of sound commonsense.

He had force of character enough to work for anything he wanted with unflagging energy and perseverance—but there was another side of him that longed passionately for ease and pleasure and luxury; and to this side of him the narrow, laborious, ascetic life of a country town had always been irksome and distasteful.

On arrival he presented himself in his uncle's counting-house.

His heart failed him a little as he went to this interview, but he did not show it in his manner.

He had enough of that good Anglo-Saxon quality called pluck to carry him through composedly.

"Crandall! oh, yes," his uncle said to the clerk who announced him; and then the great merchant got up and shook hands, and asked his nephew to be seated.

In that moment the two men took stock of each other.

Robert saw in his uncle a stout, prosperous-looking, self-satisfied man of business; but a man with a good head, and not without capacity

for feeling—a man sure to make himself both obeyed and respected.

The uncle, looking at his nephew for the first time since he saw him, twenty-two years ago, a baby in his cradle, beheld a tall, strong, manly fellow, with a decided family likeness to himself.

Like the thorough man of business that he was, Mr. Spendwell made himself, in a very few minutes, as well acquainted with his nephew's business capacities and mental acquirements as his first keen, close observation had made him with his face.

At the end of this brief, rigid examination, he said:

"Ah, I shall be able to do better by you than I thought. My bookkeeper is leaving me to go into business for himself. His first assistant takes his place, and I think you are capable of stepping into that man's shoes. You will have three weeks before your real work begins, to learn your duties. Come and dine with me to-night, sharp six—and consider yourself invited to my house for all the Sundays."

That day young Crandall got settled in his new quarters. He even found time to write a line to his mother; and another to Lucy Morrison to tell her that the good fortune she was to share had begun. A little before six, he was in his uncle's drawing-room; and there he saw for the first time his Cousin Clara.

She was a very different type of young lady from any he had yet encountered. At twenty-one she was the mistress of her father's house; and she looked thoroughly equal to her position. She was blonde, like her Cousin Robert.

A careful observer might even have detected the kinship between the stalwart young fellow from the country, and this delicate, patrician-looking creature, who had always "fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life."

This beautiful creature, with her delicate face—coral at the lips, and like the heart of sea-shell in the cheeks—received her cousin with a welcome as kind as need be, but just touched with the hoar-frost of her stateliness.

And Robert Crandall looked at her, and said to himself:

"This, then, is what a woman can be? I had not thought there were such in the world."

It never occurred to him in those first days that he was in any danger of loving Clara Spendwell. He, himself, would have been the first to deride the mad folly of such a thought. But he used to wish, from the very first, that Lucy Morrison were more like her; and that is a dangerous sort of wish for a man to have about the woman to whom he is in honour bound.

Months passed on, and Robert Crandall more than fulfilled his uncle's expectation. He displayed a business ability so really remarkable that Mr. Spendwell was moved to write to his sister in the country an absolutely warm and hearty letter of congratulation.

As time went by, the young man's visits became more and more frequent at his uncle's house. All his Sundays, as a matter of course, were passed there.

It was an exciting pleasure to carry her prayer-book to church; and to hear her sing to her father, in the evening, the old hymns her mother had loved once was to young Robert the very finest of musical entertainments.

But all this time he never guessed his own secret; looking always on his cousin as quite beyond and above his reach; regarding her somewhat as a young page might the royal princess it was his pleasure to serve.

He wrote quite regularly to Lucy Morrison; but, I fancy, stranger love-letters were never written.

Every Saturday night he set down, duly, what he had done throughout the week; and he made it a point always to include some allusion or other to the future he was making for her.

At first, Lucy used to answer these allusions in some shy, pretty little sentence from which a more anxious lover might have divined her heart; but, after a few months, she left them



unnoticed, and wrote letters sweet and kind, but precisely such as one friend would write to another.

And so things went, till that June night, when, going up the steps of his uncle's house, Robert Crandall heard his cousin's voice singing, and stood still and listened. With the last words of the song, which rang out in a sort of passionate triumph he knew, suddenly, what all the past months had meant. It was as if a door had been opened, and out of it had burst a great light.

"Yes," he said to himself, "this, which I feel, is love—and I have never felt it before. She is nothing to me. She never can be. Not for a moment would my uncle listen to such a thing—not for an instant would she bend toward me, from her stately height; and even if both could be, I am bound to Lucy. But this is love. I think I am glad to know."

He went in, half-dazed. Clara was not alone. She rose and introduced him to Mr. Paul Desmond; adding:

"Of course, you know Mr. Desmond in one way; you were speaking of his last novel the other night."

So this stranger belonged to that other world of letters which Robert Crandall had regarded all his life, with a sort of distant wonder; a certain reverent desire and secret inclination?

Whatever he had felt before had been like the palest flush of the early dawn compared to this great, strong, newly-risen sun. He sat there quite quietly; and seemed to listen. He was vaguely conscious that Desmond and Clara were talking about books with which he was unacquainted; and that, now and then, she ran her fingers over the keys of the piano, and played a bar or two of some familiar air. He perceived those things in some external, half-unconscious way; yet he had never been so desperately alive in all his life.

He knew that, at last, his doom was upon him.

He had no least hope that his cousin would ever love him; and even had this been possible, he would have had none of her father's toleration of such a love.

A man as rich and as ambitious as George Spendwell would naturally have quite other views for his only child.

And even had both these impossible things been possible, what right had he, the promised husband of Lucy Morrison, even to think of such a mad delight?

He was roused from his reverie by the adieux of Mr. Desmond; and then his uncle came in, and there was a brief conversation, after which he went away.

The next morning he was summoned to an interview in the counting-house.

He had a half-guilty feeling at first. He wondered if his uncle had perceived his interest in Clara, and was about to dismiss him on the spot.

But he soon perceived that the interview was to be of a most amicable nature.

He heard himself commended for skill and faithfulness and success with a heartiness which surprised him.

And then his uncle said:

"I want you to go home now, and see your mother. I am not a man to make much parade of the domestic affections; but I never have forgotten my favourite sister, and I fancy I care quite as much about her as many a man who says a good deal more. She has good reason to be contented with her only son; but I bear in mind that this is her first separation from you, and she'll be wanting to see you. Suppose you get off at once? It's the middle of June, now; and you need not come back till the first of September. Clara and I shall be getting out of town, also, to-morrow."

Robert Crandall had just one thought in his mind, away from that interview.

Now was his time to save his honour; to redeem his manhood.

He would go to Sayfield, and ask Lucy to be his wife by the end of his vacation. He would

bring her back to town with him; and then he would be safe.

"Safe, but not happy," whispered something in his heart—and:

"Honest, if not happy," he answered that something, proudly.

He reached Sayfield next day, just in time for supper; and after that high feast was over, he walked along the pleasant country ways toward the house of Lucy Morrison.

At the gate of her own home he met Lucy. She had come to wander through the soft dusk—a gentle creature, all in white, with a single deep crimson rose on her breast.

If Robert had not been so infatuated with Clara's blonde loveliness he must have seen how rarely charming, in another way, was this girl, whom he had known all his life.

He was an utterly unexpected apparition to her; and, as they met face to face, she started as if she had seen a ghost.

She put out her hand, and he took it quietly, and quietly kissed her.

"I have been successful, even beyond my expectations," he said; and I have come back for you. I have a vacation of six weeks, and I want you to be ready to be married at the end of it, and go back with me."

There was a strange and almost rude abruptness in his manner of speaking; but he was quite unconscious of it, his mind was so full of one thing before him to be done.

The sunset light still lingered; and by it Lucy Morrison could see his face.

There was nothing in it of lover-like tenderness or softness.

She looked at him steadily for a moment, and then she asked, just as quietly as he himself had spoken:

"Are you quite sure that this is what you want, Robert?"

"Yes, quite sure, Lucy."

"Robert, I think that two people who mean to pass all their lives together should, at least, be absolutely honest with each other. Do you want to marry me because you love me best in the world?"

He was quite silent; perhaps he was considering how he could answer her. But she did not wait for him.

"Dear," she said, gently, "I have felt for some time that you did not love me. Your letters were a friend's letters, not a lover's. And now, I think, you have come to ask me to marry you thus hurriedly, because you are afraid to trust yourself. You have seen someone whom you love better."

Yet Robert Crandall did not speak. He bowed his face in his hands, and was utterly silent for a few moments more.

Then at last he raised his head with the old, proud honesty in his eyes, and said, fearlessly:

"I will tell you the truth. I have seen someone I am afraid I shall love; and I wish you to save me from myself. She does not love me. She is not the wife I ought to have. You are the right wife for me, Lucy. Will you be patient with me for a little while, and give yourself to me for my healing?"

"No," she answered, with a heavenly gentleness in her tone. "No, that would be to do you ill. I will give you something better than myself—your freedom."

"Ah!" he cried, bitterly, "you do not love me well enough to marry me. You want pay for your love—value for value; and because, just now, I cannot give as much as I want to receive, I am to have nothing."

"Dear," she said—and he could not help thinking what a lovely and tender voice it was—"it is because I love you too well. I could not bear to feel that you might have been happier without me. No, I am sure I am right. From this moment you are free."

"From this moment I must loathe and despise myself."

"No, you are not so much to blame yourself. You had seen nothing of the world when you asked me to wait for you. You gave me the best feeling you had to give then. Was your inexperience to blame, because you did not

know the difference between that feeling and love? Let us part now, dear. When you have learned to think more justly of yourself, you will let me be your friend, just as I had been all my life, before you made that mistake, for which not even your own conscience should condemn you. Good-night."

And before he could stay her she had gone in out of the gathering twilight, and he was alone.

He did not understand her calmness. He did not know that she could not bear one single word more; and no human ear heard the bitter sobs and cries that burst from her poor white lips when she had shut the door of her room behind her, and was all alone.

The next day it became to be known, as such things do come to be known in a country place, that Lucy Morrison had left home and gone to visit an aunt in Brighton.

No one spoke directly of it to Robert Crandall except his mother.

"I thought there was something between you and Lucy," she said to him.

And then—for the poor fellow needed comfort sorely—he opened his heart and told her all its secret pain.

"Lucy was quite right," she said, when he had finished; and then, mother-like, she began to comfort him. Why should he despair of his cousin? Certainly his uncle had shown himself well-disposed toward him; and certainly—here the mother's pride spoke—he was a man for a girl to love.

The vacation seemed eternal. The first day of September found him in London. He went up to his uncle's house that evening. Mr. Spendwell was in his smoking-room, and had a large pile of papers before him. He asked a few questions about his sister, and then he said: "I am busy as you see; and Clara will be wanting to see you. So I shall send you to her."

Nothing loth, Crandall found his way to the drawing-room, where Clara sat alone. She rose, with more than usual animation, to greet him.

"I am so glad to see you, Cousin Robert. We have returned to town earlier than we expected. Did papa tell you why?"

"No, he told me nothing."

"Oh, he knew I would rather tell you myself. I am sure you like me enough to be deeply interested. I am to marry Mr. Desmond in two months, and I have come home to get ready."

For an instant Robert Crandall seemed to see everything in the room whirling and whirling. And he thought the lights were all going out. Then he recovered himself, and managed to say, in an inquiring tone:

"Mr. Desmond, the author?"

"Yes. We have cared for each other for two years; but papa would never hear a word to it, till after the success of his last novel. Then he let him visit at the house. Don't you remember, you met him here just before you went away?"

Remember! Would he ever forget? He never knew how he answered her; but somehow he contrived to satisfy her with his congratulations; and soon the conquering hero himself came, and Crandall shook hands with him, and then got away.

All his life he will look back to those weeks that followed as a wild nightmare of misery. He managed to do his work by day, but his nights were terrible. It was very strange, but the one sole comfort he found in that dreary time was the memory that Lucy Morrison had loved him.

After awhile, the agony of Robert Crandall, like other sharp tortures, seemed to wear itself out; and by the first of December, when Mr. and Mrs. Paul Desmond returned from their bridal journey, he was ready to bid them welcome quite calmly; and could really look at the beautiful bride with a little wonder in his heart that he could possibly have suffered so very deeply because of this woman, who had never at any one moment felt more than a cousinly kindness for him.

Three years went on, after that, without his once going back to Sayfield. He persuaded,

new his mother, and now his father, to visit him instead. I think some feeling which he did not try to explain to himself made him shrink a little from meeting Lucy Morrison.

When Mr. and Mrs. Desmond had been married three years, they gave a party. Literature had prospered with Mr. Desmond; and it is very natural to be kind to the successful; so his father-in-law had opened his heart, and given Clara a house. This party was their house-warming. Of course Cousin Robert must be there; though, ordinarily, he rather shunned than sought general society.

This night, even, he was among the latest comers. When he went in, he saw standing near his cousin, a graceful woman, who was in such admirable contrast with Mrs. Desmond that he stopped a moment to observe them before he went forward to pay his respects.

All his heartaches about his cousin were over long ago. I am not sure that he was at all sorry, even, for his youthful disappointment. His twenty-sixth birthday was just passed, and he was on the road to wealth and success.

It was rare for him to look at any woman with as much interest as he was bestowing on the dark, distinguished-looking stranger who was standing by his cousin's side.

She wore a dress of some soft-falling black stuff, filmy and clinging. As he looked, something reminded him of Lucy Morrison.

"Lucy would have been much like that," he said to himself, "if she had had the advantage of city training."

Just then Mrs. Desmond caught his eye and smiled, and he went up to her.

"I think here is an old friend, Cousin Robert," she said. "Mrs. Read brought with her Miss Morrison, from Sayfield. Surely you must know each other?"

"Surely we do," said Miss Morrison, extending her hand with frank cordiality.

For a moment Robert Crandall saw nothing in that room. He was standing under the old trees in a country road, and a girl, this girl, only three years younger, and very different, was turning from him, and walking silently up towards her father's house, as he had seen her last, when she had said "good-night," and turned away from him so quietly in the twilight.

It hardly seemed to him this stately and self-possessed woman could be the Lucy whom he had held so carelessly once, and parted with so easily.

Now she appeared to him "something better than he had known." How she must despise him, he thought; and yet she was so kind and cordial that he grew at ease with her in spite of himself.

Six weeks after that he sat with her in Mrs. Read's parlour. They had been talking, as old friends will, about old times. They had seen a good deal of each other in the six weeks just past; and Robert Crandall had learned that Lucy's visit to Brighton just after her parting with him had procured her an engagement to teach there; and, in that way, she had fallen heir to the graces and refinements of city life. They had been talking, as I said, of old times, but of course with a certain sense of restraint. At last silence fell between them—a silence which at length the man broke suddenly.

"Lucy, if I were to tell you now that I love you, I have forfeited the right to have you believe me. And yet I should be telling you the truth."

There was a moment when no one spoke, and then he said:

"Are you angry, Lucy?"

"No, Robert."

"Could I ever hope," he went on, "to make you understand me? I don't think I did love you in those old days. I was fond of you, you know, and I had been all my life; and I did not know any stronger emotion. Then I saw my Cousin Clara, and she seemed to me a creature quite different from anything I had ever seen. And I suppose I fell desperately in love with her. I certainly thought so then; but I believe I have been very glad, for a long time now, that she is Mrs. Desmond. And now I love you. I can't expect you to believe me, but

I know myself it is the strongest feeling I have ever experienced. You are all I have ever desired or dreamed of, and yet I, myself, turned your heart away from me; for I think you did care for me once, Lucy."

The answer came in a tone so low he could scarcely hear it:

"I have never got over caring, Robert."

He moved closer to her, and took her hand, and looked down into the dear dark eyes.

"Be careful, Lucy. Don't encourage me unless you mean it. I behaved to you like a sneak once; but now I love you with all my heart, and soul, and mind. Is it in human nature that you can forgive me?"

"I told you then what I tell you now, that I had nothing to forgive. You behaved then like an honest man—you told me the truth. I believe that you have told it to me now; and—"

He waited a moment for the next words, but they did not come; and he saw that she was crying quietly; and then he drew her wet face against his heart, which was to be henceforth her home.

L. C. M.

## FACETIÆ.

### FROM SCOTLAND YARD.

It is a mistake to suppose that the Groom of the Stole holds an appointment in the new Department of Criminal Investigation. The gentleman in question has no more to do with catching thieves than had a detective—of the old pattern bien entendu.

—Judy.

The man who upset his bicycle the other day was so severely injured that he had to be taken home in a quadricycle.

### "NO RETURNS."

WHY a Scotchman never goes "bock agen."—Because a man's nae profit in his ain country."

—Fun.

### ANYTHING BUT ANI-MATING.

In the game of war to be check-mated is a serious fate for a commander and his army, but even worse, perhaps, is it for a leader to stand by and see his forces positively deci-mated.

—Fun.

### "TURF."

DOCTOR (to patient who has been sadly mauled on the racecourse): "Well, how are you now,—a little better, eh?"

PATIENT: "No, doctor; I always was a very large one!"

—Judy.

### ON THE ROLLS.

THERE is every reason to believe that the long roll of years to come will be swallowed up by Time as usual.

—Fun.

Good wine may need no bush, but, alas, many a "Bush" lacks good wine.

PISCICULTURE.—In many parts of the world the perch is kept in a birdcage.

### A "WUNNER."

SOCRATES said that "nothing is harder of attainment than the knowledge of oneself"—or "Number One." Another maxim teaches that "the first step is the most difficult." In arithmetic these two hard problems are combined, for the first step in the knowledge of numbers is to attain that of Number 1.

—Fun.

### AN UNREASONABLE COMPLAINT.

A CORRESPONDENT of the "Times" complains that Sir Stafford Northcote wants to make people "pay for useless puppies." But who that has anything to do with useless puppies is not forced to pay for them? It is inherent in the nature of useless puppies that they must be paid for.

"WHAT are you about there?" said a gentleman to a boy whom he found in his orchard, disposing of a few apples to great advantage, viz., in hat and handkerchief—for pocket he had not. "I'm about going," said the boy.

### SETTLING.

"Do you know," remarked a rather fast youth, the other day, to a stuttering friend to whom he was slightly indebted, "do you know that I intend to marry and settle down?"

"I do—don't know anything about it," was the reply, "but I think you had b-b-better stay single and set-settle up."

### EASILY WORKED.

AN auctioneer was selling a lot of land for agricultural purposes.

"Gentlemen," said he, "this is the most delightful land. It is the easiest land to cultivate in the country—it is so light, so very light. Mr. Parker here will corroborate my statement; he owns the next patch, and he will tell you how easy it is worked."

"Yes, gentlemen," said Mr. Parker; "it is very easy to work it, but it's a great deal easier to gather the crops."

### GRATITUDE.

It was an Irish horse-stealer who when O'Connell had obtained his acquittal, exclaimed, in the exuberance of his gratitude, "Och counsellor, I've no way here to thank yer honour; but I wisht I saw you knocked down in my own parish—wouldn't I bring a faction to the rescue!"

### ONLY PROPER.

It has been arranged at the War Office that, in the event of the Highland regiments going into active service, the feather bonnet is to be replaced by the new helmet.

The bravery of the North Britons is well known; and feathers are felt to be a little out of place in the costume of a regiment which never yet took to flight.

—Judy.

### A KITCHEN FIRESIDE STORY.

He had brought the butter and was gone. "Ah!" she said, twisting her ringlets round her dirty finger, "I wonder if it will all end in a ring; yet rings have no end, but there's no end to the rings at our bell, drat it!"

And she went up sorrowfully, and answered the door.

—Fun.

### A SLIGHT MISTAKE!

In the ladies' waiting-room at the Central Depot the other day were a newly-married couple from Grass Lake.

They had been visiting in the city two or three days, and were then ready to go home.

They sat side by side, of course, his arm around her waist, and she leaning on his shoulder.

A long-waisted stranger from the East, having sore eyes and a big heart, walked in, saw them thus seated, and in about a minute he asked of the husband:

"Has that woman there got the toothache?"

The husband looked up in surprise, but made no answer.

After two or three minutes, the long-waisted man again remarked:

"If that woman has got the toothache I have got a bottle of peppermint in my satchel here."

The bride rolled her big white eyes around, and the husband looked somewhat embarrassed.

The man from down East unlocked his satchel, fumbled among shirts and collars, and brought up four ounces of peppermint essence.

He uncorked it, touched the contents of the bottle against his red tongue, and, handing it forward towards the husband, feebly said:

"Just have her sop some on a rag and rub her gums with it. We've used it in our family for—"

The bride's eyes threw out sparks as she lifted her head from its loving position, and, striking at the bottle, she snarled:

"Tuthache, you fule! If you don't know the difference 'tween true love and the tuthache you had better go to grass with the geese!"

### THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

LEARNING how to walk in French boots with six-inch heels.

—Punch.



## "GOING THE ROUND."

The general impression is that the Royal Academy Exhibition this year will not be of even average excellence.

It is difficult to say how this estimate can be fairly made, and it is of course only founded on the partial and incomplete critical survey which is taken by those who "go the rounds of the studios," and give their impressions in print or in chatter in advance.

This "going the round" custom is being overdone.

## A PLACE WITH A FIRE.

In a Connecticut district school, a few days since, a little boy six years old was seen to whisper, but denied doing so when reproved by the teacher.

He was told to remain after school, when the teacher, trying to impress upon his youthful mind the sinfulness of not speaking the truth, asked him if they did not tell him in Sunday-school where bad boys went who told falsehoods.

Choking with sobs, he said:

"Yes, marm; it is a place where there is a fire, but I don't remember the name of the town."

## TARIFFIC REDUCTION!

A PARAGRAPH which is "going the rounds" states that beef can be bought in Belgrade at one penny per pound, and forwarded to London by express trains in six days or less at a cost of three farthings a pound.

"Fat pigs can be bought at twopence half-penny a pound, and lambs at £1 the score."

Perhaps it is this singular fact that accounts for the sudden increase in the price of butchers' meat within the past few days.

Such facts as these will have to be unusually stubborn ere they will be believed with legs of mutton fourteenpence a pound, steak sixteenpence, and an extra charge of twopence a pound over all for civility and attention, scale-variation, and the peculiarities of book-keeping.

## A BORE.

SHERIDAN was a rare one to put alongside of a bore.

A merry circle was gathered round the club smoking-room fire, one evening, when to them entered one of the greatest of the family of Bore; a man who was always boasting of the lordly and aristocratic company he kept.

"Only fancy," said the B., "I was dining at —'s" (mentioning a duke's name) "to-night; and, you'll scarcely believe it, but there was no fish on the table!"

There was half a minute's "strict silence," and then "Sherry" spake:

"Well, I don't see anything so remarkable in that. Perhaps they had eaten it all upstairs!"

## AN ACADEMY SENDING-IN ANECDOTE.

CARMAN: "There was a reg'ler whistler of a hartist once what I took a picter for, and he says:

"'Keep it this side up,' he says.

"'Wot for?' I says.

"'Cos it's the top,' he says.

"So I makes a chalk mark. But somehow it gets rubbed off in the wan; and ven it was unpacked, the character o' that picter was sich as no one never know'd rich was the bottom on it."

## SUCH AN OPPORTUNITY.

A GENTLEMAN named Dodge was charged with fraud, a lady named Savage was censured for cruelty, a party named Welsh was convicted of dishonesty, and a tramp named Toes-er (of it may have been Tozer, but it's all the same) was done something to. Oh, if we only wanted to write comic paragraphs, what lovely chances these would be.

## CURIOUS.

SOME one (married, of course) remarks upon the strangeness of the fact that, while a woman takes to it intuitively, very few men have the slightest idea how to hold a baby. Quite true; and it is even more extraordinary, when you

come to think about it, that even fewer men ever want to learn.

—Judy.

"HANSON is that hansom does," remarked one "showfull"-driver to another, when he had found out that his fare was a professional, through his having cheated him.

—Judy.

## STATISTICS.

THE HEALTH OF LONDON.—According to the Registrar-General's return 2,563 births and 1,903 deaths were recorded in the metropolis last week. Since the 1st of April the death-rate has not been so high as it was last week, when it reached 27·8 per thousand. The deaths were 215 above and the births 38 below the corrected average for the corresponding week. Of the chief zymotic diseases whooping-cough was fatal in 99 instances, measles in 77, small-pox in 51, and scarlet-fever in 35. The increase in the number of deaths from small-pox was very marked, as the same number has not been recorded in any week since June. Twelve of the certificates have on them no reference to vaccination. In fourteen instances the sufferers had been vaccinated, and in twenty-five the operation had not been performed. Diseases of the respiratory organs caused 541 deaths, or 133 beyond the average. Sixty-one of the 71 violent deaths arose from negligence or accident. Two hundred and twenty-seven deaths took place in workhouses, 120 in hospitals, and 11 in lunatic asylums. The death-rate in Greater London was 26·2 per 1,000, against 27·8 in the Inner Circle.—May 18.

## LIVING FOR LOVE.

Two lovers sought a maiden fair,

And each began to woo;

Of equal station, equal wealth,

Equal in person too.

Where rivalry so equal strove,

What could the maiden do?

Each promised her eternal truth—

For lovers all are true;

Each pictured worlds of happiness,

And scenes of pleasure new;

Each was the truest and the best—

What could the maiden do?

"I'll die for you," one lover said,

"What further can I do?"

"I'll live for you," the other said;

That was a promise new.

The maiden gently bowed her head;

What else could maiden do?

'Tis not so hard in this hard world

To die; then all is past.

The love that's bold enough to live—

That is the love to last.

"And you will live for me?" she said;

"Well, then the die is cast." F. J. O.

## GEMS.

SPRINGS are little things, but they are sources of large streams; a helm is a little thing, but we know its use and power; nails and pegs are little things, but they hold the parts of a large building together; a word, a look, a smile, a frown, are all little things, but powerful for good or evil. Think of this, and mind the little things.

CAN the evil wrought by gossip be estimated? We trow not. A wise woman can scarcely say too little in company if the conversation trenches in the least upon scandal.

HOLD yourself well in check. The weakness and inefficiency of the men and women who cannot hold a tight rein over themselves in the emergencies of life are most pitiful.

THE heart which is capable of receiving the purest rays of joy, must have been shadowed by the darkest clouds of sorrow.

## HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CREAM CAKES.—Stir one-half pound of good butter into one pint of warm water; set it on the fire, slowly bring to a boil, stir often; when it boils hard, slowly stir in three-quarters of a pound of sifted flour, let it boil one minute, stir constantly; turn into a deep dish to cool; beat the yolks of eight eggs, and whip it into the cool paste; then beat the whites of eight eggs and whip that also into the paste; drop tablespoonfuls on buttered paper; do not let them touch each other or run together; bake ten minutes. The filling is made in this way—one quart of sweet milk, four tablespoonfuls of corn-starch, two eggs, and one even cupful of sugar; wet the corn-starch with enough milk to make it into a paste; then boil the rest of the milk; beat the eggs well, and mix them up with the sugar and wet corn-starch; as soon as the milk comes to a boil, pour in the mixture; stir it constantly until smooth and thick; add a small lump of butter, season with a dessert-spoonful of vanilla or tablespoonful of lemon, and set aside to cool; split the puffs open with a sharp knife, and fill up with the corn-starch.

TO MAKE SCRAP SCREENS.—One with three folds is most convenient, and the height should be from five to six feet, according to the height of the room for which it is intended. Each partition should be covered with a paper to constitute a ground, and for this nothing looks better than a glazed black paper. Place a large coloured picture in the centre of each partition, and round it group smaller ones, all of which should be coloured to look well. Most people cover their screens entirely, leaving no ground to be seen, but this is quite a matter of taste; as, if the bare edges of pictures are concealed by a wreath of flowers or ferns (which can be bought by the sheet ready cut out), the black ground is rather an improvement than otherwise. Each picture should be pinned on the screen and arranged before it be pasted on finally, so that the effect may be seen. Paste is the best material to use, and should be made rather thick and free from any lumps. When the three panels of the screen are finished (for it is very seldom both sides are covered with pictures) each should be carefully varnished and be allowed to dry before any attempt at folding the screen up be made. There should be a border of leather round each panel (either a binding or the stamped leather), which is scolloped out and laid on the edge of the screen; a brass-headed nail being placed in each scollop is a great improvement.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

APPLICATION OF THE TELEPHONE.—The telephone has received a new and ingenious application by M. D'Arsonval. It is found to make a wonderfully sensitive galvanoscope. From direct experiments he ascertained that an induction coil will affect the telephone at a distance fifteen times that at which its action ceases to be perceptible on a prepared frog, which is the most delicate galvanoscope hitherto known. The sensibility of the telephone is estimated to be 200 times that of a frog's nerve. Unfortunately the apparatus does not seem to be capable of furnishing measurements of currents, but of revealing their existence.

It is quite true that when Mr. Gladstone got down his last tree, Mrs. Gladstone walked amongst the people who were looking on, and distributed chips among them as a memento of her husband. It is also true that it was a dead oak which was being operated upon, and which the amateur woodman found to be a tough customer to make much impression upon. As the right hon. gentleman, with the perspiration rolling down his face, was resting for a few minutes to take breath, an aged farmer, who had been watching the proceedings, observed, with the greatest solemnity, "That be a good old Tory tree, governor. He'll take a deal of felling."

## CONTENTS.

Page.	Page.
SHE SHINES MR	CORRESPONDENCE ... 168
DOWN ... 145	
SCIENCE ... 148	
THE WHISPERS OF	CONVICTED commenced
NORMAN CHASE ... 149	... 734
THE INVISIBLE COM-	THE LORD OF STRATH-
MODORE; OR, THE	MERE; OR, THE HIN-
SECRETS OF THE	DEN CRIME, com-
MILL ... 153	menced in ... 767
AUTOGRAPHS ... 153	
SINNED AGAINST: NOT	SINNED AGAINST: NOT
SINNING ... 153	SINNING, commenced
THE LORD OF STRATH-	... 771
MERE, OR, THE HIN-	
DEN CRIME ... 157	SHE SHINES MR
CONVICTED ... 160	DOWN commenced in
AUSTRALIA ... 163	... 778
IN HONOUR BOUND ... 163	THE WHISPERS OF
FACETIE ... 166	NORMAN CHASE com-
STATISTICS ... 167	menced in ... 783
HOUSEHOLD TREA-	THE INVISIBLE COM-
SURES ... 167	MODORE; OR, THE
GENE ... 167	SECRETS OF THE
MISCELLANEOUS ... 167	MILL, commenced in
	787

## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

**ENDREAVOUR.**—No legal claim could now be established to the deposit, as the Status of Limitation could be pleaded in opposition, but it is possible that the authorities of the bank, if applied to, would deliver it up to the person whose relationship to the depositor could be satisfactorily demonstrated.

**ALBION E. A.**—Service in the Royal Navy is commenced at an early age, and the routine of a training-ship has to be gone through. Apart from this, the fact of having been a soldier would make no difference. The minimum height for Light, Medium, and Heavy Cavalry respectively is 5 ft. 6 in., 5 ft. 7 in., and 5 ft. 6 in., chest measurement, 33 in., 33 in., and 34 in., for 5 ft. 10 in. 35 in.

**P. G. T. VIOLETTE.**—The word *astore* is used as a term of endearment, but we have never met with it on a ring, although of course it may frequently have been so employed.

**BELLE AMI.**—1. With the space at our command we regret being unable to describe the place and people of Rhyll, North Wales. 2. As the young man has failed to fulfil his promise to write to you there must be obviously some cause for his omission, but not necessarily forgetfulness of yourself. Wait a little longer. Perhaps time will solve the enigma.

**MAGGIE.**—1. Your liver is out of order most likely, and in that case an external application would be useless without other means being taken. A doctor or chemist would advise you best as to remedies.

**A. CONSTANT RHEIN.**—To remove moles from the chin we have seen the following mixture recommended, a small portion of which is to be applied twice a day: Distilled vinegar, one pint; sage leaves, lavender flowers, and rosemary tops, of each, dried, one ounce; one drachm of cloves and the same quantity of camphor. After maceration for a few days and filtration it is ready for use.

**O. P.**—Thanks for lines, which we have, however, no room for at present.

**NELLIE R. JONES H. & Mrs. G.**—Contributions declined with thanks.

**AMATEUR.**—House plants ought to be stimulated gently once or twice a week. Rain water, so refreshing to summer flowers, always contains ammonia, which also abounds in all liquid manures. If you take an ounce of pulverised carbonate of ammonia, dissolved in one gallon of water, it will make spring water even more stimulating to your plants than rain water. If you water your plants once in two weeks with guano water (one tablespoonful to a pail of water), they will grow more thrifty. Always keep the soil in your flower pots loose. A common hairpin used daily will stir the earth sufficiently.

**ANDREW.**—April derives its name from *aperire*, to open, because at this season the earth seems to be opening and preparing to enrich us with its gifts, or, according to Varo, from *Aphrodite*, the Grecian name of Venus, because April is consecrated especially to this goddess. It is singular with what pertinacity a custom which has once got a foothold among the popular amusements of a people through several successive generations, will still continue to maintain an ascendancy, which even the progress of refinement and the consequent change of manners are hardly able to subdue. Such an instance may be found in the strange and ludicrous custom of April Fool's Day, about the origin of which there has been much diversity of opinion, but which prevails throughout Europe, and in those parts of America that are inhabited by descendants from Europeans. Something similar to it is said to exist in the East Indians at the time of the Holi feast.

**MARY J.**—It has been asserted that all people are mad on some point or another, and we really do not see any absurdity in the notion. Extravagance, either in action or sentiment, produces derangement of the mind. A pet theory, constantly nursed, leads to a species of idolatry, which interferes with the exercise of the reasoning faculties, by monopolising attention that should be distributed over a larger surface. The pets in families are nuisances—so are pets of the brain. They produce disorder. For an ounce of good they have caused they have created a ton of misery. Enthusiasm is an excellent companion, but a rather dangerous friend. It cannot always be trusted. Like an ignis fatuus, it leads the imagination into swamps and quagmires. Anything so extravagant as to drown the idea of the probable and useful proclaims a touch of lunacy. How many are so afflicted the daily experience of us all can too well attest.

**M. M. A.**, twenty-two, would like to correspond with a gentleman about her own age.

**ISABEL R.**, nineteen, fair, hazel eyes, tall, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony.

**JENNY and HELENA**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Jenny is eighteen, fair, medium height, hazel eyes, fond of home, Helena is eighteen, fond of home, fair, blue eyes.

**TIN POT and KETTLE**, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. Tin Pot is nineteen, dark hair, blue eyes, fond of dancing. Kettle is eighteen, light hair, blue eyes. Respondents must be fond of music.

**SABINA and PATTY**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young gentlemen. Sabina is twenty, tall, fond of home, of a loving disposition. Patty is nineteen, of medium height, light hair, blue eyes, fond of home and children.

**ANNIE F.**, twenty-one, dark hair and eyes, would like to correspond with a tall, dark young man. Must be twenty-one.

**THE SIGS**, twenty-four, tall, dark, would like to correspond with a young lady about the same age, loving, and fair.

**WILL C. R.**, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-three, brown hair, dark eyes, fond of music, good-looking, tall, good-tempered, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be between nineteen and twenty-three, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, fond of children, brown hair.

**BESSIE and ADDIE**, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men with a view to matrimony. Bessie is tall, dark hair and eyes. Addie is fair, light hair, blue eyes. Respondents must be between twenty and twenty-five, fond of home and children, and of loving dispositions.

## THE NEST-BUILDERS.

The birds will soon their nest-building

On every hand begin;  
Already many a busy wing  
Is fluttering out and in  
The naked boughs; the stream reflects  
A brighter, bluer sky,  
And nature's little architects  
Are hurrying swiftly by.

The lapwing builds in covert wastes,  
The woodpecker in heights,  
The oriole, with other tastes,  
In pendant bowers delights;  
While bonny, bonny ruddy breast  
Nests closely to the ground,  
High up in leafy boughs the nest  
Of yellow-bird is found.

The meadow-lark nests all content  
With hut of straw or hay,  
While jay and thrush, I know, are bent  
In villas far more gay;  
His humble taste the wren displays  
With lowly house and nest,  
While, plaining theirs in trimmer ways,  
The blue-birds theirs complete.

There are no sullen shocks or "strikes,"  
No mutinies or broils;  
Each maketh as he wills and likes,  
And singeth as he toils;  
The interests of Capital  
And Labour here agree,  
Harmonious action, great and small,  
Unites on bush and tree.

And still with song their work is wrought,  
As though their little breasts  
With loving thought of Him were fraught  
The while they build their nests;  
And sweet it is, from cliques and sects  
And noisy factions free,  
To watch these charming architects  
That build so wondrously.

N. D. U.

**LUCY**, twenty-four, tall, dark hair and eyes, good-looking, domesticated, would like to correspond with a gentleman. Must be dark, fond of home.

**J. T. C.**, twenty-two, brown hair, grey eyes, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, wishes to correspond with a young man about twenty-four, dark, and loving.

**C. B. and B. M.**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men. C. B. is seventeen, light hair, blue eyes, medium height. B. M. is eighteen, medium height, loving, dark hair, dark brown eyes, fond of home and children.

**D. L. and S. G.**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. D. L. is good-looking, dark. S. G. is nineteen.

**E. C.**, twenty-five, dark, would like to correspond with a young man about the same age with a view to matrimony.

**M. M.**, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-two, fair, medium height, would like to correspond with a young lady with a view to matrimony about nineteen, fond of home.

**EMILY and HILDA**, two friends, would like to correspond with two gentlemen. Emily is fair, hazel eyes, tall, fond of music, of a loving disposition. Hilda has dark blue eyes, fair.

**ALEX P.**, twenty-two, dark hair, blue eyes, of medium height, good-looking, fond of music and dancing, would like to correspond with a young man fond of home and loving.

**F. S. D.**, nineteen, of a loving disposition, tall, dark hair, would like to correspond with a young gentleman with a view to matrimony. Respondent must be about twenty, fond of home and children, brown hair, dark eyes.

**ELLEN J.**, twenty-three, fond of home, would like to correspond with a tall gentleman with a view to matrimony, dark.

**V. N. and A. A.**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men about nineteen. V. N. is eighteen, light hair, blue eyes, medium height. A. A. is seventeen, dark hair, brown eyes, medium height. Both of loving dispositions.

**J. E.**, fair, of a loving disposition, thoroughly domesticated, would like to correspond with a young man about twenty-two, fond of home and music.

**J. S. and N. S.**, two friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen. J. S. is eighteen, tall, good-looking, dark hair and eyes, fond of music, of a loving disposition. N. S. is eighteen, fair, dark blue eyes, tall, fond of music. Respondents must be about twenty, medium height.

**B. T. and B. T.**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young men about twenty-four. B. T. is twenty-two. B. T. is twenty, brown hair.

**D. C.**, twenty, good-looking, tall, dark, would like to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, dark hair and eyes.

**B. E. and C. M.**, two friends, wish to correspond with two young men. B. E. is seventeen, medium height, of a loving disposition, light hair, blue eyes, fond of home and children. C. M. is eighteen, brown hair, dark eyes, medium height, fond of home and children, of a loving disposition. Respondents must be about twenty-one, fond of home.

**POLLY**, twenty, brown hair, blue eyes, would like to correspond with a gentleman about twenty-five, fond of home and children.

**G. C. M. and G. A.**, two seamen in the Royal Navy, would like to correspond with two young ladies. G. C. M. is handsome, fair, tall. G. A. is good-looking, fair. Must be about twenty, medium height.

**G. and J. G.**, two friends, would like to correspond with two young ladies. G. is nineteen, tall, fair, handsome. J. G. is twenty-one, fond of music, of a loving disposition.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

**ANNIE** is responded to by—Harry, eighteen, dark hair, loving.

**LIZZIE** by—Robert, eighteen, dark hair, and fond of home.

**F. E.** by—M. T., twenty-three, black hair, dark eyes, fond of home.

**KATE** by—T. M.

**ANN** by—Under the Bell, fond of children, and good-looking.

**ANN** by—Steam Ram, twenty-one, medium height, and fond of music.

**LILY** by—S. L., a sailor in the Royal Navy, twenty-one, brown curly hair, blue eyes, medium height.

**MAUD** by—J. T. C., twenty-three, tall, fond of home and dancing.

**EDY** by—Nell, fair.

**RICHARD** by—Ettie, dark hair and eyes, of medium height.

**ERNEST** by—Britta, twenty-one, dark, fond of music and children.

**GUSTAVO** by—Evelyn, eighteen, medium height, and fair.

**MIMNER** by—R. J. S., twenty, good-looking, tall, fond of children.

**MARY** by—T. S. P., twenty-three, dark.

**ALICE** by—W. S., twenty-four, good-looking, dark.

**ETHEL** by—J. P., twenty-one, tall, light grey eyes.

**BARRY** by—Vivienne, eighteen, brown hair, hazel eyes, fond of home and children.

**HARRY** by—Cissy, seventeen, medium height, brown hair, blue eyes.

**EVELYN** by—Hero, nineteen, good-looking, dark, good-tempered.

**G. G.** by—M. E. H., eighteen, fair, brown hair, blue eyes.

**LOTTIE** by—John, seventeen, brown eyes, and medium height.

**ALL** the Back Numbers, Parts, and Volumes of THE LONDON READER are in print, and may be had at the Office, 334, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom Post Free for Three-halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

THE LONDON READER, Post Free, Three-halfpence Weekly; or Quarterly One Shilling and Eightpence.

LIFE and FASHION, Vols. 1 to 2, Price Seven Shillings and Sixpence each.

EVERYBODY'S JOURNAL, Parts 1 to 4, Price Threepence each.

\* \* Now Ready, Vol. XXX. of THE LONDON READER. Price 4s. 6d.

Also the TITLE and INDEX to Vol. XXX., Price One Penny.

NOTICE.—Part 184 (May) Now Ready, Price Sixpence, Post Free Eightpence.

N.B.—Correspondents must Address their Letters to the Editor of THE LONDON READER, 334, Strand, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily authors should retain copies.

London: Published for the Proprietors at 334, Strand, by A. SMITH & Co.